

THE
HISTORY
OF
Miss Beville.

V O L. II.



Next Month will be published,

(In three Volumes, Price 9s bound)

The Perplexed Lovers ;

Or, the HISTORY of
Sir EDWARD BALCHEN, Bart.

Printed for F. and J. Noble.

THE
HISTORY
OF
Miss Emilia Beville.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED BY W. HOGGARD,

FOR

FRANCIS NOBLE, at his Circulating Library, near
Middle-Row Holborn;

A N D

JOHN NOBLE, at his Circulating Library, in *St. Martin's*
Court, near Leicester-Square.

M D C C . L X V I I I .



By exchange

THE
HISTORY
OF
Miss BEVILLE.



LETTER XXX.

Miss EMILIA BEVILLE, *to Miss*
HARRIOT MOLESWORTH.



OW would my dear Harriot pity me, did she know the cruel reception I met with from my unjustly offended family! Good heavens, my dear friend, you know not the trouble and uneasiness I have suffered since my return. All my prayers and tears are

VOL. II.

B

ineffectual,

2 *The* HISTORY *of*

ineffectual, I am persecuted to death, I am blamed—yes, Harriot, blamed for all that has happened. Had I given (as I was often but with too much mildness desired) my hand to the man who made me such generous, such disinterested offers, all this vexation might have been avoided, and I been engaged in no such ridiculous adventure. Ah, is this kind, nay, is it not cruel, cruel to excess, thus to upbraid me with a fault of which I am certainly innocent? Did I not at that time, freely yield the required obedience? Could it be wondered at, or thought unreasonable, that I should wish, as long as possible, to delay the completion of my misery? Surely no; and yet, Harriot, I am treated unkindly; extremely so by my father, nor does my mother endeavour to soften his resentment. His pride is hurt, that an affair of this nature should have happened

happened to one of his daughters. I had not been at home many hours before he informed me of his unalterable resolution.

Do not think, said he, that I will give you an opportunity to follow your prudent sister's example. I will no longer be tormented with the care of daughters, if this is the case. One runs away with a beggar, and the other is run away with by I know not whom. I'll have no more heroines in my family, your romantick adventures shall be ended in a very few days; and thank your stars they end so well. You shall be married child; have as many after that as you please, or your husband will let you, but while you are mine, I will have no more of them. Look at your sister Caroline with her gay ensign: a pretty couple, and in a hopeful way they are, it must be confessed. This it is, Emilia, to marry a fop.

4 *The* HISTORY *of*

Be thankful now, as you certainly will in a very few months, that I have provided you a husband whose wisdom and knowledge of the world will serve to direct your steps and save you from any such insults for the future.

In vain was all I could say. I implored him to hear me, to reflect a moment on my past conduct, to do me justice, nor cruelly blame me for what I could neither foresee nor prevent. I would live single, I would never marry to displease him, he might in every instance, but this, command my obedience; but all my petitions were rejected with the utmost rage. The vile Sir Joseph is to be here to-morrow, I will be very sincere with him: to him I may speak, and most certainly will, nor can he, I think, be much surprised at my determination. Yet, who ever had so great a share of vanity? I never will, Harriot, I am absolutely resolved I never
will

will be his, let the consequence be what it will. There is no longer a necessity for it.—If they continue deaf to my prayers, I will fly to some unknown corner of the globe, and rather learn to earn my bread with my hands, than sacrifice thus my happiness. Yes, Harriot, in peaceful obscurity I will absolutely pass my days, rather than drag on a life of pompous wretchedness. What is his wealth to me? Is it amongst the rich and great only, we are to look for sweet content? Ah, no; they must indeed be little acquainted with life, who are not convinced it dwells but seldom there. No, my dear Harriot, if you would find that blessing go to the humble cottage, the scene of industry and health, it seldom fails to visit, nay inhabit there; and there, believe me, I will seek that pleasing consolation, if not permitted to reject this hated man. I have, except in this, omitted nothing

6 *The* HISTORY of

to oblige my family ; I have ever preferred their happiness to my own ; this event, thank heaven, has no longer any connection with it ; may I not then avoid it by any virtuous means ? For to such only will I have resource.

Adieu, my dear friend, I have nothing to add that can give you any pleasure : should any more favourable sentiments take place in the breast of my father, I will with joy make you a sharer in my happiness. I have not yet had courage to mention my desire to see Caroline. Ah, Harriot, what would I give to know the present sentiments of the amiable Beauchamp ! But it is impossible I ever should be acquainted with them, the bar between us is insurmountable. Pity me, my dear, my only friend, and continue to esteem

Your,

EMILIA BEVILLE.

LET-

LETTER XXXI.

To the SAME.

READ the inclosed copy, my dear Harriot, and tell me if the author is not the most generous and engaging of men. Read it, and teach me how I ought to behave in a case so difficult. To begin a correspondence with him, unknown to my family, I never will—Ah what has he then to hope?—No, they shall have no just cause to upbraid me, my rejecting this tormenting man is the only instance in which I ever opposed my will to theirs, and shall be the last, unless they drive me to extremities by their severity.

Jenny gave me the letter I send you, this morning. Her sister, you may remember I told you, is woman to Mrs. Beauchamp. By her means, he no doubt flat-

8 *The HISTORY of*

ters himself his epistles will be conveyed without suspicion. But tempting as the opportunity certainly is, I will, whatever the refusal may cost me—and you, Harriot, may judge by the inclosed, it will be no small mortification—I will resist it. Yet civility demands that I should give him the reasons which induce me to act with this apparent severity. Should I only return his next unopened, would it not appear the common effect of prudery, or a little female parade, usual on these occasions? No, I will answer it, and convince him how extreamly improper it would be, circumstanced as I unhappily am, to commence such a correspondence.

Unhappy, my dear Harriot, beyond conception, tormented continually with the odious assiduities of this vile knight, persecuted every moment by my family on his account, shocked to see the very imprudent unthinking conduct of that family
which

which I am bound to respect and honour; how dreadful my condition! They press me to obey, merely that they may no more be plagued, as they term it, with the care of children. Ah, Harriot, what sentiments are these for parents to entertain! Ought not those children to be more dear, ought not the care of settling them in life to be one of their pleasing, though perhaps difficult, designs? Alas, of how much true pleasure do they deprive themselves, for the unsatisfactory amusements in which they are continually engaged! A family is their misery, the very idea of it fatigues them. Can a father, whose whole time and attention is dedicated to pleasure, as it is falsely called; can he, I say, condescend to regard the pains or distresses of his child?—Can a mother, gay as mine, reflect or study what will most probably conduce to the felicity of her daughter?—Ah, no—to be delivered

from the obligation of these duties is their only care: this is their view; to accomplish this, I am doomed to wretchedness. My late unfortunate adventure is now the constant pretence for persecuting me. I have talked to the cause of all my sorrows, I have implored him to pity, and not oblige me to offend my family by a positive denial. I besought him to desist from his importunities, and thereby restore me that peace to which I had so long been a stranger; but he hears me with indifference, and again renews his hateful declarations. Heaven only knows what will be the event, but marry him I never will.

Adieu. I must leave you at present, nor shall I be able to finish this till tomorrow, as we have company to dine, and cards in the evening. Think, my dear friend, how painful it must be, depressed as my spirits are, to appear
with

with a face of unconcern and tranquillity. But can I, indeed, appear so?—Ah, no, I am not yet so practised in dissimulation.

* * * * *

Wednesday morning.

Who do you think was one of last night's party, to the apparent chagrin of the old knight! Lord B—. Shall I confess, Harriot, that I am not free from the spirit of revenge? No, my dear, I really enjoyed, with infinite satisfaction, the uneasiness his assiduities gave to that tormenting creature: it was this alone which could have induced me to suffer them without regret. I hoped he might be piqued at my behaviour, and, with a becoming pride, subdue his rebel heart. This flattering thought, I say, made me shew the utmost politeness and attention to every thing my lord said:

B 6

my

my condescension gave him visible pleasure. He was gay and lively to excess, and looked with no small contempt on the ancient knight, who followed us continually with his eyes, nor ever failed to interrupt our conversation whenever in his power. Every one saw the designs of both, and smiled no doubt at the looks they cast at each other.

Need I inform you his lordship renewed his former declarations? that he begged permission to wait on me on more private days? that my heart alone could ensure his felicity, and a thousand other compliments equally sincere? For his lordship must excuse me, if I cannot believe his felicity will ever depend on the heart of any female, however fair or beautiful. But this was the subject he, as a man of gallantry, made choice of to entertain me with, not doubting but those speeches from a man
of

of his figure, would give me more pleasure than if uttered by his stately rival, for he did indeed assume most stately airs. I made no direct reply to his request, but appeared easy, nor shewed any signs of displeasure for his having presumed to make it. You cannot imagine the joy I felt during the whole evening, in the hope Sir Joseph would shew a proper spirit and resentment. My mother was too deeply engaged to give any attention to my behaviour: she left that affair I suppose to the care of her intended son, and, to do him justice, he did care abundantly. I have not seen him or any of my family since, though his venerable knightship is to breakfast here; but mamma is not up, nor will I presume for some hours, as it is now scarce nine o'clock. I am in some terrors, lest my coquetry should not produce the desired effect. Should I see any degree
of

of coolness in my swain at his next visit, he may depend on a perfect cure; I will certainly conquer his ill-fated passion by a repetition of the same remedy, the first opportunity, and if I may take my lord's word for it, I shall be at no loss on that account. Yet, good heavens, Harriot, should Mr. Beauchamp hear of this man's visits at our house, should he believe it possible for me to favour a lover of his libertine principles, a man so universally known for his gallantry and intrigues, what an idea will he form of your Emilia's sentiments! Ah, I tremble at the very thought! Nay, can he fail? Do not every one observe Lord B—'s assiduities? Ah, I will no longer hear his odious declarations, I will never see him more. Yet, how then shall I mortify this tormenting knight? I know not: I am perplexed, Harriot, I am dying with a thousand fears: have I
not

not reason? What will the amiable Beauchamp think when informed, as he soon will be, if not already, of his lordship's visits? He has not yet seen his uncle, who still vows revenge. Ah, could he but forgive! had he once seen and conversed with such a nephew! Heavens! should he have any suspicion that this nephew is his declared, and—let me to you confess—highly favoured rival, what a storm will it raise in his unforgiving breast!

Farewell. Write to me, direct me with your advice, tell me, my dear Harriot, how I am to avoid this marriage, for avoided it must be at all events.

Adieu,

EMILIA BEVILLE.

L E T.

L E T T E R XXXII.

To the SAME.

N O, Harriot, my gaiety with Lord B— has not indeed produced the desired effect: instead of the spirit and pride I hoped the old knight would shew on such an occasion, which he certainly would have done had he a proper degree of either, he mentioned it to my father, and made the favour I expressed for his lordship a pretence to hasten my misery. My father was in a rage, and commanded me to make no farther objections, but prepare to give my hand the following week without a murmur. Ah, think what were my emotions at that dreadful moment! Again I fell at his feet, and bathing his hand with my tears, implored him to spare his unhappy daughter, and besought

fought my mother to intercede for me, nor suffer me to be so precipitately hurried to despair. They heard me unmoved, and after a thousand cruel reflections on my behaviour to Lord B--, left me in a situation that would have excited pity in any hearts but theirs. I should have died, my dear Harriot, yes, I am persuaded my grief would have killed me, had not Providence interposed, and given me a respite from despair.

Sir Joseph had not left us half an hour before he returned with a visible change in his countenance.

I come, my lovely Emilia, said the horrid creature, to inform you of an event that almost distracts me. Could it fail, since I am thereby prevented from accepting that hand at the appointed time, on which the happiness of my life so wholly depends? Ah, would you consent to bless me with
that

that inestimable gift before I go!—for go, my charming bride, I must: an affair of importance demands my immediate presence at one of my estates. I am in despair at the thoughts of this delay: a fortnight, or perhaps three weeks, without seeing my Emilia will kill me with grief. Condescend then to my importunities: say, shall to-morrow be the happiest day of my life?—My father was so cruel as to repeat his dreadful request. I could only answer with my tears. They then began to talk of the horrid affair, as if they believed my silence was meant as my consent: this shocking supposition gave me courage. I declared I could not, on any consideration in life, consent to their proposal; it was impossible, I should expire to be so hurried. I implored them by turns not to drive me to despair by such precipitation.

Would

Would I then chearfully obey when Sir Joseph returned?

What could I say? I never will be his, Harriot, durst I then make a promise I meant not to keep? With a thousand impertinent speeches, he at last took his leave, seeing his presence was not likely to inspire me with any more favourable sentiments; and I was ordered, in no very mild or gentle terms, to go and prepare for the approaching solemnity. My joy at this delay is inexpressible; not, you may believe, as it prevents me for a while from becoming his, for that I again repeat I never will, but as it will give me time to consult in what manner I am to avoid it.

Now, my dear friend, accept my unfeigned thanks for your obliging offer. Your house would indeed be a most desirable asylum, but can I indulge the desire of my heart in agreeing to that
delightful

delightful proposal? Would it not, when known, create a coolness between our families? What a return would that be for such unmerited obligations! No, my dear Harriot, it is a felicity not permitted me to enjoy. Would to heaven it was! but a number of circumstances render it impossible; I must, therefore seek out for some other. Ah, can I ever hope to find one so infinitely agreeable? No, my sweet friend, I am not born to happiness: all I have to do is to bear my fate without repining or discontent: let me then endeavour it.

EMILIA BEVILLE.

P. S. Jenny has this moment desired to speak to me: she has a thought to communicate, which she hopes will not be disagreeable. The good girl has ever expressed the utmost affection for me, and is, I am persuaded, perfectly sincere.

sincere. You shall know her business in my next, if it is worth your hearing.

Adieu.



L E T T E R XXXIII.

To the SAME.

THE important point is at last determined; I have found an asylum, where I may for a while remain in peace and safety, till my father can be prevailed on to change his cruel purpose. I told you in my last, that Jenny begged leave to speak to me on an affair of some consequence; it was indeed of the utmost. This, in few words, was the subject of our conference.

She is, as you know, perfectly acquainted with all my affairs: she had frequently heard me wish for some retreat,

treat, to which I might for a while retire. Reflecting on this, the following scheme occurred to her, which she with great modesty and respect begged leave to propose, Her father is a clergyman, and has a curacy, about fifty miles from London, worth only twenty pounds a year: his sister keeps his house, he having been long a widower. After many apologies for presuming to give her opinion so freely, Ah, my dear madam, said she with visible anxiety in her looks, would you condescend to honour his cottage with your presence, how happy would he be! Though poor, continued the good girl, he is honest, and, with pleasure I tell it, greatly valued and even respected by all the neighbourhood. It would be his delight to make your situation agreeable. His house, though small, is neat and decent: at this season too the country about it must be extremely pleasant,

as

as it is allowed to be a remarkably pretty situation, though retired. It is about half a mile from the village, and but little more, added she, from Beverly hall, where Lady Beverly constantly resides, and who is the best lady in the world. To her I am indebted for the little education I am mistress of: she put us all to school at her own expence, nor has ever ceased being a generous friend to my dear father.

To this good man, my dear Harriot, I am determined to go, should my parents continue obstinate in their present dreadful design; but that I may have nothing to reflect upon when this step is taken, which heaven knows will give me unspeakable pain, I am determined once more to try all my influence on the heart of my father:—I will promise him to live single, or never to marry contrary to his inclinations; that I will with pleasure retire to any of my relations

relations he shall make choice of, and thereby relieve my mother and him from a charge they think so extreamly disagreeable ; in short, I will with joy consent to any proposal they will do me the favour to make, on condition I may, without incurring their displeasure, reject the man who has been the cause of all my misery. In case I fail in my intercession, which heaven forbid ! this is the manner in which my design is to be put in execution.

My cloaths, and whatever else I mean to take with me, are at different times to be carried by Jenny to a friend of hers, there to wait till the day of my departure arrives. Ah, Harriot, what painful emotions shall I endure on that fatal day ! Yet, surely, my conduct will not be wholly unpardonable : I do not, to avoid one lover, put myself into the protection of another, as has too often been the case ; no, I fly from my family,

it

it is true, but I trust it will by every unprejudiced person be thought excusable, when it is considered I am going to people of virtuous and honest characters, to a family, the master of which is, by his sacred profession, rendered respectable. You, my Harriot, must vindicate your friend, should any malignant tongues take liberties and censure those actions the cause of which they are not so well acquainted with as you. I have very fortunately received the legacy left me by my dear aunt, which will enable me to repay the obligations I shall receive from those good people: had I not been thus opportunely supplied, I should have found myself at some loss, as I never was miser enough to be at once possessed of any great sum. The moment I have talked to my father, in case he is inexorable, Jenny is to write to hers, in order to prepare him for

26 *The HISTORY of*

the intended visit. A week or two after I am gone, she is, on some pretence, to leave her place and follow me. Indeed my absence will be reason sufficient, as she properly belongs only to me.

This, my dear Harriot, is the design I have formed, and will certainly put in practice, if my petition is rejected, and I am not freed from the hated address of this odious man. You, and only you, shall know the place of my retreat, I will trust that secret in your friendly breast, nor doubt its perfect security. I will write to you frequently, that shall be my chief amusement: you too will sometimes favour me with a letter. But why do I speak in this cold, this formal manner, to my Harriot? Yes, you will write to me constantly, and inform me of every thing that happens either in your family or my own: should you also add, now and

and then, a line concerning a certain person, whom it would nevertheless be a thousand times more prudent to forget, your correspondence will not perhaps be the less agreeable. Thus have I ended this affair, and will now proceed to tell you another.

Notwithstanding the answer I sent to Mr. Beauchamp, in which I gave him my reasons for begging he would on no consideration venture to write again, he has disobeyed my just commands. I yesterday, to my inexpressible surprise, found in my pocket a second epistle from that too amiable man.—What could I do?—I read it, Harriot, and, let me confess to you, my dear friend, I read it with infinite pleasure. He renews the declaration of a passion which he, lover like, vows no time or circumstance can ever abate: his happiness or misery is wholly in my power. Ah, would to heaven they

were! Alas! he knows not how extremely that power is limited. He implores my permission to write, since all hopes of seeing me at present are vain and impracticable; begs I will by some means avoid driving him to despair, by giving my hand to the man I so greatly disapprove. He would not, he says, presume to take so great a liberty were he the man of my choice; no, were that indeed the case, dreadful as it would be, he would endeavour to bear his fate in silence; but as it is not so, he beseeches me, both for his sake and my own, not to be terrified or persuaded into unavoidable misery, to give up every pleasing hope of future felicity, merely to gratify the self-interest and ambitious views of my family. Then, in the most respectful manner, apologizes for presuming to mention those but too visible motives, which nothing but the tenderest love
and

and esteem should have prevailed on him to do: a love that took possession of his heart the first moment he saw me. He reminds me of that extraordinary meeting, and says, that Providence certainly would not have taken such uncommon means to preserve me from wretchedness, nor have chosen him for my deliverer, without some further designs in our favour.

What think you, my dear Harriot, of his reasoning? Does he seem to understand the decrees of fate? His predictions are, I am greatly afraid, rather to be wished than hoped. I dare not flatter myself with the pleasing prospect. As my stay will, in all probability, be but short in town, I am the more indifferent about his writing, though, I nevertheless enquired of his friend Jane (for so I find she is in no small degree) by what means his billet doux was conveyed into my pocket.

She found means, however, to appease my wrath, and also courage to plead his cause with tolerable success. I charged her, notwithstanding, to give me no future proof of her officious dexterity; but so very limited, as I told you above, is my power, that I have not been able to prevent her disobedience, and behold, this morning produced another.

I have at last assumed courage to beg permission to see Caroline: it was rejected with a frown. I then wrote to her, as that was not denied me; perhaps indeed because not asked. But pray, Harriot, guess by whose means it was I received her answer — only Lord B. He gave it me with an air of vast importance, willing no doubt to make a merit of the prodigious obligation; telling me he thought himself the happiest man in the world in being thus honoured; begged I would,
after

after perusing it with proper attention, permit him to convey my answer to Mrs. Stanhope; but judge what was my surprize when, retiring to my apartment, I found slipped into the end of hers, one from himself! It was not sealed, and consequently not to have opened it would have signified nothing, as he would still have believed I had seen the contents. It contained the most pompous declaration of love, esteem, admiration, and all the fine speeches that gallantry could dictate, to confirm the said declaration. He besought me to permit him to think of some means for my deliverance from the horrid fate that awaited me. Would I condescend to hear him, on the important subject? He was sensible there were but a few days between him and despair, if I did not favourably listen to his proposal. Would I indulge him so far as to meet him at my sisters? She

had promised to plead in his favour. (This she does most violently in her letter) How could I think of obeying the tyrannical commands of a father who gave such evident proofs that he studied only his own interest in the sacrifice he required? (Here a thousand wild schemes which he had projected for my deliverance) Would I but render him happy by my consent, to which ever I thought the most agreeable!

I could not but observe, amongst the many plans he had laboured to prove so extreamly expedient and practicable, he had omitted to mention the only one which in my opinion is so, namely, a trip to Scotland: this, the good man quite forgot—we are to suppose. Any adventure but that, and I doubt not his Lordship is my most obedient. A matrimonial one is, I presume, rather grave, for a person of his gay and lively taste. Not that he
would

would have me think so, I dare say, but I must be of that opinion, nevertheless. If I wrong him, why does he not openly apply to my father? It is most certain he would prove a formidable rival, when declared in form, to their favourite knight: I mean in *their* judgment, mine is out of the question: I declare against both with equal fervor. How Caroline and his Lordship came to be so amazingly intimate, heaven knows: quite a friendship between them—a pretty friend, to say truth. You may believe I shall neither trouble him with my answer, nor her house with the requested interview.

Would to heaven I were safely arrived at my rural habitation! I half tremble, lest this so ingenious projector, should put some of his plans in execution, and thereby not only frustrate Sir Joseph's hopes, but mine also: no man more likely, especially as he has the

plea of my aversion to his rival to urge in his defence. Yet I believe my fears on that account are ridiculous, for, as Caroline says, the days of chivalry are at an end: we read, indeed, of such amazing stories as ladies, in former times, having been by dozens carried off, but those instances are confined to books alone, in life we meet with no such violent doings.

Adieu, my dear friend, I go to desire an audience of my father. Ah, did he but know how wholly my future peace depends on the answer he is to give to my petition, he would surely pity and remove my fears.

Yours,

EMILIA BEVILLE.

LET-

LETTER XXXIV.

To the SAME.

ALAS! my dear friend, all my hopes are vanished! my father was in a rage, he even used me cruelly, nor would hear me speak. No sooner did he know the subject on which I had desired to be heard, than he ordered me to be silent, and learn, as my duty directed, to obey. Said, he was informed I intended to follow my sister's example, but would take effectual care to prevent my imprudent purpose. I assured him the accusation was false, and was beginning to mention those promises and proposals I told you I intended, but he would not give me leave to proceed; and, telling me, if I had really no such design, my obedience would be the less mortification, he

left me, nor would hear another word. I implored my mother to intercede for me: she declared it was not in her power, were it in her inclination, to alter my father's resolution. She was dressing for Renelagh, and with great ease and gaiety desired my company. You may believe I excused myself from being of her party, having a mind but little disposed for any amusement of that kind: instead of which I sat down to inform you of my bad success.

My journey then is determined, it is my only resource, and I hope an innocent one. Your approbation has given me infinite pleasure, it has relieved my spirits from a load of uneasiness and doubt. Your repeated offers of protection I read with tears of gratitude, but must still, from my first motives, refuse, and console myself with the reflection that the retreat I
have

have made choice of does not seem in your opinion any way blameable or imprudent. I should still be more happy if your mamma knew the whole affair, yet I tremble lest she should, from motives which might to her appear necessary, reveal to my father this important secret. Do as you shall judge best, my dear Harriot, tell her or not, as you think proper, I only repeat, her approbation would better enable me to support the dreadful tryal.

Jenny is at this moment writing to her father: next Monday is fixed for the important day. To what a scene will it be witness in this family! — Yet, is it not unavoidable? — Ah, let me not reflect, lest I should not have power to keep my resolution. — Yet, surely, does it not require infinitely more to break it?

Jenny has again transgressed. The too prevailing Harry every day finds
means

means to convey an epistle, and every day renews the declarations he first made, adding a thousand others, equally pleasing. But to what purpose, Harriot, are all his vows of constancy, his engaging professions? Alas! were I disposed to believe him—Do I then doubt that word so sweetly given? Answer for me, Harriot, you know every sentiment of my heart.—To what purpose, I say, are all his vows, since it is almost impossible we should ever meet again?—at least I may with certainty pronounce we never can with the consent of my parents, and without it he can have nothing to hope: one act of disobedience in a family is more than enough. What then, I say, has he to hope?—Nothing, Harriot, it is impossible he should: yet he is of a different opinion, else why should he thus importune me not to be persuaded to my ruin? His death, he continually assures me, will be

be the immediate consequence of my consent.

With what ease, my dear Harriot, do these men talk of dying! Alas, are they not merely words of course? Lord B— too swears his life or death depends on my smiles.—Pretty significant compliments these, could one but see now and then an instance to prove their sincerity.—My Lord, I am persuaded, will never be the person to give it, whatever my more gentle and amiable Beauchamp may do. Yet, heaven forbid he should! I am already but too fully convinced of his truth and affection.

His Lordship has a friend in the family, it is very evident, though I have not been able, with all my enquiries, to find out which of the servants it is. I have every day found letters from him, sometimes on my toilet, sometimes in my work-basket.—Jenny declares

declares her innocence in terms I cannot doubt. Indeed she is too deeply interested in Mr. Beauchamp's fate, to favour his rival.—He is as violent as ever. Begs, nay insists upon my agreeing to some of the proposals he has presumed to make; reminds me of the short time between me and misery; assures me Sir Joseph is expected in a few days, for he knows, with amazing exactness, every thing that passes in our family. Declares, Mrs. Stanhope approves of his design; and, to induce me to consent, adds, he is well informed, the day of his arrival will be the last of my liberty. Miserable should I be, Harriot, had I no other resource: but, thank heaven, I shall avoid that horrid fate without his interposition. Is it possible Caroline should approve his design? It cannot be that she would wish me to be obliged for my liberty to a man of his character; she knows

not,

not,
her
plea
days
about
viole
be a
you
easy
could
ing
dear
differ
increa
am p
us ou
more
did h
mome
rejoice
Ad
thousa
my in

not, certainly, the use he makes of her name.—Yet, does she not herself plead his cause? But no matter, a few days more, and I shall be indifferent about either him or his passion: his violent care and concern will then be all at an end; but should it not, you may believe I shall be perfectly easy about the matter.—Ah, would I could with truth say as much concerning another person! Yet why, my dear friend, should I wish to be indifferent? That I am not so does not increase his pains; on the contrary, I am persuaded, notwithstanding they tell us our peace and happiness is infinitely more dear to them than their own, did he but know what I at this cruel moment suffer on his account, he would rejoice with great sincerity.

Adieu, my dear Harriot, I have a thousand things to settle in regard to my important journey. I tremble lest
my

my spirits should fail me during this dreadful preparation. Write to me immediately, encourage me, I beseech you, with your repeated approbation.

Yours ever,

EMILIA BEVILLE.



L E T T E R X X X V .

To the SAME.

AH, my dear Harriot, with what terrors do I see the preparations making for my intended marriage! My mother in high spirits, is continually entertaining me with the figure I shall soon make. Jewels, equipage, court, plays and balls, are the allurements she offers to bribe my imagination. Alas! my dear friend, she is a stranger to your Emilia's heart and sentiments,

OR

or she would be sensible those empty insignificant vanities would make but small impression on it, when purchased at the expence of her future peace. I do not say those distinctions have no charms; I am, perhaps, but too much persuaded they have many; but, surely, not enough, my dear Harriot, to compensate for the loss of every other blessing. My conduct will, I flatter myself, be thought excusable by all those who do not look on riches as the greatest gift heaven can bestow: and that there are too many that do, is most certain. But it is not their censure I fear, their opinion will not give me any great concern; tho', were it possible, I would act in such a manner as to merit every one's esteem and approbation. Need I observe how vain and impracticable that attempt would be?

I every

I every day, in spite of all my precautions, receive letters both from the distressed Beauchamp, and the presuming Lord B. The latter, vainly imagining he has my good opinion, seems fully persuaded that I shall, before Sir Joseph's return, be prevailed on to accept his offered assistance, and talks, with great gaiety of the Knight's approaching disappointment. In short, there is no end to his schemes for my deliverance, as he is fond of expressing it; no doubt by way of giving his offered service an air of more significancy and importance. Caroline espouses his cause with great warmth, fully persuaded, I presume, that his intentions are honourable. His Lordship, honourable as he is, must however pardon me, if I a little suspect them for this once; but as I give myself no great concern whether they are or not, I read his flaming professions with perfect indifference.

Ah,

Ah, Harriot, how differently am I affected by those of the amiable Beauchamp! It is impossible to describe to you the engaging manner in which he writes. So pleasing, so insinuatingly soft and persuasive! But are not the obstacles insurmountable? Our families at variance? Irreconcilably so? Impossible then, my dear Harriot, it cannot be. Let me endeavour to forget him then; this task, painful as it is, shall be my employment, when in my peaceful retreat.

Adieu, till to-morrow. I am obliged to attend my mother on a visit. As it is one of form and ceremony, you may believe I promise myself but little pleasure or satisfaction: should I be disappointed I will confess my error, and inform you of it. Adieu.

* * * * *

Good heavens! my dear Harriot, who do you think was the first person I saw
on

on entering the room yesterday at Mrs. Blaney's? I am not yet recovered from my inexpressible surprise. There's no describing my emotions, nor those of the charming Harry—for it was himself, Harriot, it was indeed, the elegant Beauchamp. Judge then whether I have not the confession to make which I promised!—Yes, Harriot, I acknowledge my error, and declare it was infinitely the most agreeable visit I ever yet made. Our visible agitation must have been observed by the company, had they not in general been too deeply engaged at quadrille to mind any other affairs. Happy was it, for me at least, that they were so. Mamma had never seen him before; she immediately distinguished his graceful form—Ah, could she fail?—and was asking every one who he was. I then believed they had not been able to inform her, as I saw no change in her looks:

looks: those of admiration still kept possession of her countenance, which I fancy would not have been the case had she known him to be the son of Mrs. Beauchamp. — Yet, why should that knowledge have produced the effect I feared? for was it not in fact owing to him that I was restored, and their hopes from Sir Joseph again renewed? I was however deceived, for as we returned home she spoke highly in his praise. Never had she seen a more elegant person or more graceful manner, and for face there was no doing him justice. What is your opinion of him, Emilia? said she; you have some acquaintance with him. I own, continued she, I should not have been sorry had he been Sir Joseph, instead of his uncle, on condition you could have inspired him with a passion as violent as that the Knight entertains for you. I promise you I should make
no

48 *The HISTORY of*

no objections to such a son; the first good action you do after you are married must positively be to insist on Sir Joseph's being reconciled to his handsome nephew, I am persuaded he can refuse you nothing.

What a conversation for your friend! Imagine, if you can, the situation I was in at that moment, for it is impossible to describe it. Joy, you may believe, had some share in my emotions, though what she said was certainly without meaning, nor could produce any of the delightful effects I so ardently wished.

Mamma was soon engaged at cards. I, you know, seldom play, and you may believe was not forward to offer that evening. Can you guess who also begged to be excused, or in what manner I was entertained, to compensate for the want of the amusement I had rejected? It was not a place where he
could

could fully express his joy, yet had his eyes only spoke, I should have been perfectly sensible he was inexpressibly happy at the unexpected interview. This flattering truth was visible in his every word and look. He found an opportunity to repeat what he has a thousand times declared in his letters, that his whole happiness depended on my determination in regard to his uncle. Implored me to pity, nor reduce him to despair, by consenting to their dreadful commands. Was I to blame, Harriot, in giving him my promise I never would? Ah, could I refuse? Was it possible to resist his insinuating eloquence? But what indeed is the consequence? A few days would have discovered to him my design, if I had not: why then refuse him this small consolation? My promise gave him a joy of which you, Harriot, can form no idea. He dreaded my want of courage,

as much on my account as his own; whatever was to render me unhappy could not fail to ensure his misery; he wished much to know by what means I meant to avoid their importunities, and, notwithstanding my promise, expressed the most violent apprehensions, lest my fortitude should forsake me on the day of trial. I again assured him he might depend on my resolution, as nothing could have power to break it. He then, with the most tender importunity, implored me to make a second promise, more immediately in his favour; but this I declined, convinced, as I told him, every hope of that kind was absolutely vain. Begged he would no longer entertain any such, since there were a thousand obstacles which must ever render his design impracticable. He did not seem in the least inclined to follow my prudent council, on the contrary, he again begged me to repeat
the

the promise I had made. A promise, he declared, on which he founded all his hopes of future happiness and felicity. I did so, and with this consolation left him.

In consequence of our last night's conversation, I this morning early received a packet from him, lest I should have forgot what past at the delightful interview. Ah, Harriot, he need be under no apprehensions: he may depend upon it I have no design or inclination to forfeit my word. How he may approve the expedient I take, that I may be able to keep it, I do not know, but it is the only one I can think of to preserve me from wretchedness.

I have written a long letter to Caroline, in which I have given her all the advice in my power, and some hints in regard to Lord B—, of which she is doubtless ignorant. I am willing how-

52 *The HISTORY of*

ever to suppose so, as I think, did she more perfectly know his character, she would neither wish me to favour his passion, nor suffer him to visit so frequently at her house. I have given her a few rules which I think most likely to regain her husband's wandering affections, but fear she is too indifferent, about what would to me appear of such infinite importance, ever to put them in practice. I have, however, the satisfaction of having done my duty in thus reminding her of what is certainly hers.

Adieu, my dear, my amiable Harriot. If I do not die with grief, you shall hear from me as soon as I arrive at my destined abode. Continue to love

Your affectionate,

EMILIA BEVILLE.

LET

LETTER XXXVI.

To the SAME.

I AM sensible my Harriot will rejoice to hear I am safely arrived at my humble retreat, and that I am as happy as it is possible for me to be, considering the dreadful circumstances which induced me to make choice of it. Yes, my dear friend, I found every thing here much more agreeable than I had reason to expect. Could I but find amongst the many purling streams which adorn our rural habitation, one possessed of the important virtue for which Lethe was so famed, I should, in perfect peace and tranquillity, spend my future days in my rural abode: memory is the only source from whence I am likely to meet with any interruption to my felicity. But ah, Harriot, is not this abundantly sufficient to destroy it?—I

D 3 endeavour,

endeavour, as much as possible, to banish every tormenting reflection. I wish—or rather let me say—I try, to forget the past scenes in which I have been engaged, and give my whole attention to those I am now surrounded with. They are indeed of a very different nature; yet could I procure one draught of that precious stream, I am persuaded they would afford me more true satisfaction than all those fatiguing vanities I have left. Yes, my dear friend, could I be so fortunate, my hours would glide on in perfect peace. I need not tell you, it is not the gay, the trifling world which I regret; its pleasures never had for me those charms so generally ascribed to them: it was not in their nature to give me any real or heart-felt satisfaction. No, Harriot, the remembrance of these will never give me a moment's pain. But can I banish from my breast the pleasing image of the tender, the amiable

amiable Beauchamp? Is it possible to forget — Ah, Harriot, is it possible I should desire to forget — that elegant lover? — Let me confess it is not. Where then can I hope to find uninterrupted tranquillity?

I found Mr. Simpson, as his daughter had told me, a man of good sense, and possessed of abilities that would have enabled him to shine in a more exalted station, had his merit met with its just reward; but it is not in this life we are to expect that impartiality, and he, good man, is perfectly disposed to wait with patient resignation, till he arrives in that better world, where virtue is sure to meet with it. However humble the state of its possessor, he is content. Who can desire a greater blessing? Is not this in fact a noble reward?

His sister is a notable prudent woman, neat, and an excellent œconomist; circumstances of infinite importance to one

D 4

whose

56 *The HISTORY of*

whose income is not more than twenty pounds a year. This, to you, Harriot, will perhaps appear incredible; but it is certain, nevertheless; nor is it a singular instance. The good man tells me, there are many curates, in some parts of England, who do not receive annually above three fourths of that sum.

Our mansion, which consists of four small but exceeding neat rooms, besides a kitchen, is placed in the middle of the garden. It is no easy matter to discover whether it is composed of wood or stone, since there is not a corner of it which is not covered with woodbine, jasmine and fruit trees of various kinds. It puts me continually in mind of your favourite arbour at B—; nor is the whole building much larger. My apartment is pleasant beyond description: I can gather, without rising from my seat, either a nosegay or desert, the fruit trees and flowers uniting, in the most agreeable

ble manner, to shade my window from the scorching sun. The furniture is not, you may believe, of the richest kind, but is, I assure you, particularly neat; much more so than I expected from the income of its owner. For great part of it, Mrs. Martha tells me, her brother is obliged to Lady Beverly, who has ever been their kind friend and continual benefactress. She, it seems, lived with that lady till her sister-in-law died; her presence then became necessary at her brother's, to take care of his family. He had at that time several young children, but has now only my Jenny, and her sister, who lives with Mrs. Beauchamp. Except a cottage or two, there is not a house within half a mile. His church is about the same distance; which is not so far as to prevent my attendance, as I have ever been fond of walking: and what will render it still more agreeable, they tell me the road

58 *The* HISTORY *of*

to it is a perfect grove. I need not inform you I have not yet been there, as you know I have had no opportunity; but shall certainly accompany the honest pair to-morrow. You must not expect a more particular account of my situation, as I have not yet seen any part of the country, except the view I have from my window; that, indeed, appears extreamly pleasant. In a beautiful winding brook, which I see at a very trifling distance, they tell me I may angle with great success, as there is great plenty of fish of various sorts. This assurance may perhaps induce me to try that amusement; but where one must wait for hours, and perhaps return at last without having taken one captive, it is, I think, of all diversions, the least agreeable. Working, reading books, if I can procure any, and the said angling, shall share my time amongst them. I have also brought my lute, in case I
should

should be inclined to warble forth my hapless love under the shade of some spreading tree, of which there are numbers that seem formed for this very melancholy purpose. Do not be surprised, if in my next I should tell you, I have also purchased a few sheep, a crook, &c. to compleat the catalogue of my amusements.

Adieu, my amiable friend, do not chide me for the diminutive size of my epistle, but remember I have not yet recovered either my fatigue, or spirits: my next shall supply the deficiency of this. Mr. Simpson is waiting to carry it to the post. He is going to take his morning's walk, and promised to make that in his way. I will not, therefore, let the good man wait. Indeed, should I miss this opportunity, I may not so readily find another, as we have no superfluous servants in waiting here; my friend Mrs. Martha

60 *The* HISTORY of

being both maid and mistress, nor is she perhaps the worse served on that account.

Adieu. Write to me immediately, I beseech you, and let me know what you have heard concerning my family, and the effect my second flight has had upon them. I am all impatience, as you may believe, for your answer to these questions. Sir Joseph, I fancy, is not yet returned, though it is near the time they expect him. Believe me

Yours,

EMILIA BEVILLE.



L E T T E R XXXVII.

Miss HARRIOT MOLESWORTH, to
Miss EMILIA BEVILLE.

BE thankful, my dear girl, that you escaped as you did. One day longer, and I should never have been made

made acquainted with my good friend Mr. Simpson, nor his notable sister Martha. One single day later, I say, and there would have been an end to your arcadian project. A friend of yours who arrived in town the morning after you left it, would have effectually destroyed that pretty scheme. Yes, my dear, the very next day did your woe-begone Sir Joseph come ambling, with all the impatience of a favoured lover, to claim his destined bride. What was his surprise, or that of your goodly parents, it is not in my power to describe, when ordering a servant to inform you of his arrival, miss was nowhere to be found. It is by a letter from Mrs. Stanhope I am, within this half hour, informed of what I tell you. The consternation was general; your father raved and loudly complained of his dear spouse's carelessness, in not having had thought enough to have foreseen

foreseen what has happened, and by that means prevent it. She, with no less warmth, assures him she never was qualified for the honourable employment of a Duenna, and is, I presume, were the true state of her heart known, quite easy about the matter. As for your swain, hanging or drowning must, in a very few days, put an end to his miserable being: to live, after all this, would be absolutely out of the question. Supposing love to have no part in the affair; shame, downright shame and confusion of face, must kill him, unless he be immortal, which heaven forbid! But do not be alarmed, I know we are not fond of losing a slave, however insignificant: he is yours, I do assure you, as much as ever; though, to say truth, I believe it is horridly against his will. But this plaguy love, the disturber of high and of low, is, they say, an involuntary distemper: were it not, I must

must own, I think the old soul might find a more pleasing amusement; for this, it must be confessed, has been attended with a very small degree of satisfaction. In spite of all this, I say, he is still your captive, and, like a silly soul as he is, glories in his chains, finding he cannot break them. I vow I half pity the poor creature, in spite of the mischief he has been the occasion of: he really must look so intolerably small, after being thus twice disappointed.

The ingenious dame Beauchamp does not escape without suspicion: half the town believe her the cause of your being again carried off. Who, indeed, can they so properly blame, as the good lady, who has before given such proofs of her courage and contrivance? The same inducement still remains in force, her desires for wealth being as boundless as ever. The other half are divided
in

in their opinion : some blame Lord B—, some, more cunning than the rest, gueſs pretty near the truth, but receive no great conſolation from their ſuperior ſagacity, not being ſure they are right.

I was highly delighted with your ſiſter's epiſtle, as every line gave me new proofs of her aſtoniſhment. Never was there ſuch a ſcrawl ! In the hurly-burly, her ladyſhip has forgot to give me her own ſentiments on the occaſion ; but what will perhaps diſappoint you more, ſhe has alſo forgot to mention thoſe of the, no doubt, as much aſtoniſhed Beauchamp. It is true, ſhe might not be ſo well acquainted with them as one could wiſh, which I regret not a little ; though I am inclined to think, the youth will not be ſo apt to deſpair as his reverend uncle, ſince I believe he may, unleſs deſperately fond of that amuſement, ſtill find hopes enough to ſubſiſt on, till you are pleaſed to aſſure him

him they are not without foundation. I shall find no difficulty in keeping your retreat a secret from any one but him. Should we ever meet, and should he, with those same eyes of which I have heard so much, intreat me to relieve him from his state of torment and suspense, heaven knows what may be the consequence; for those sort of petitioners have ever had a mighty influence over my tender and too yielding heart; however, I'll try what I can do. Tho' after all, I need not, I presume, be under any violent apprehensions, as the said meeting is one of the many blessings in life I dare not suffer myself to hope for, lest I should be disappointed. Whether he raves, or is silent she does not tell me; but for Lord B—, O my dear, there's no describing his behaviour. I ever pronounced him, at best, more than half mad; what he is now I'll leave you to guess. He swears he'll
search

66 *The HISTORY of*

search every corner in England, rather than not find your place of concealment. Not a house, either palace or cot, shall escape his scrutiny. Should he find you in the possession of a rival, death and destruction is the word. — Don't be frightened, I only mean for the swain; as for you, I presume he will, in consideration of your youth, and so forth, spare your life, but this is all the favour you can expect. A fine scrape you are in, to say truth, should your evil stars conduct him to your woodbine bower! but let that thought rest amongst the improbabilities. Should the more gentle Harry indeed, take a ramble, and find himself benighted near your hospitable mansion, the case would not be quite so desperate. I question whether they are not both, by this time, set off in quest of their strayed Dulcinea. Could they have agreed the matter in an amicable manner,

ner, they might have set out on their travels something like the thing. One of them—Harry, for instance, Sir Knight—and his Lordship the squire. A pretty fancho as heart could wish.

This is all your sister knew of the affair, or could possibly tell me, though her epistle is at least half a dozen pages—no repetitions of course. She promises to write to me the moment they have heard any tidings of the lost sheep.

A-propos, now I mention those pretty creatures, I would by all means advise you to get a few, as I think you are perfectly formed to grace a crook—quite the figure for a shepherdess. I think I see you reclined by some purling stream, your flock feeding on its verdant bank, while you, with a voice more harmonious than the nightingale's, are warbling, to the soft lute, some pastoral ditty, recording the loves of Corydon and Phillis, your throbbing heart sympathizing

68 *The HISTORY of*

sympathizing in their woes. At that moment, some neighbouring swain comes that way, in search of a strayed lamb; is struck with wonder and surprise at the unusual sounds of musick so divine. He advances, sees the fair creature from whose coral lips those sounds proceed; gazes, is lost in transport, recovers, approaches, throws himself at your feet, forgets his lamb, and confesses himself your slave.—You blush, you raise him from his humble posture, you are equally struck with the beauty of the youth, you part with mutual regret, he carves your loved name on every tree. Again you return to the cooling brook. Damon loses another lamb, seeks it again near your rural seat, his vows are repeated, you hear him with a smile—and Harry is forgot.—Alas, poor Harry†

Let me know the progress of this amour, or any other adventure you meet with. I do not fancy they will be of
the

the marvellous kind, but no matter, a little imagination may embellish them, for this you can be at no loss.

Adieu, my dear girl, believe me I rejoice most sincerely that you are so happily settled; for, bad as it is, 'tis certainly a thousand times better than being chained for life to the old knight.

I have not yet done mamma the honour to let her into the secret of your retreat; though, to do her justice, she loves you too well ever to betray it; but I must for a while preserve my importance by having this knowledge wholly to myself: in time to come I may perhaps unfold to her and Charlotte the wondrous tale. Again I bid you

Adieu,

HARRIOT MOLESWORTH.

LET-

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

Miss EMILIA BEVILLE, *to Miss*
HARRIOT MOLESWORTH.

GOOD heavens, my dear Harriot, how I trembled when I read your agreeable letter! I have not yet recovered my fright; the very idea of Sir Joseph's unexpected return, shocked me more than you can conceive, tho' I was no longer in danger of his persecution. Another day would, indeed, as you tell me, have entirely destroyed my plan, and I might now perhaps have been, in spite of all my resistance, his wretched wife. — Horrid! what a thought? How extreamly happy does my present situation appear when compared to that?

So you really pity the poor man? — Upon my word, you are amazingly compassionate! Make your heart quite easy

Miss BEVILLE.

on his account, I beseech you, and depend upon it he is in no danger, he is too fond of life to resign it for such a trifle. His nephew, indeed, deserves some more serious consideration. I would hope he will not so soon forget his vows. I will preserve his inimitable epistles to witness against him, in case he should prove a perjured swain, and give that heart to another he has so often declared was wholly mine.—Poor consolation this ! As for Lord B. I cannot say I altogether admire his heroick resolution, though I think there is no great danger of his coming here to seek me, should he really turn knight-errant for my sake. Believe me, I would with pleasure spare him this romantick proof of his passion. He is not, of all men in the world, the hero I would chuse, were I to meet with any adventures, which, by the way, is not very likely, while I remain in my present abode,

abode, since nothing can be imagined more retired.

I last Sunday made my appearance at church, and though not dressed quite so much in taste as you have seen me, raised no small commotions amongst the rustick congregation. Curiosity was visible in every eye, as I followed my friend Martha to her pew. A stranger was a sight they were but little accustomed to, and as that stranger was neither old nor violently ugly, the swains, though as sleek-headed as you can conceive, gave evident proofs that they were not quite so simple as their appearance bespoke them. Not a creature there, either male or female, above the rank of shepherds or their nymphs; except Lady Beverly and her companion, a middle aged damsel, of no very promising appearance. Nothing can be more graceful then her ladyship's person. She is not young, but has the

the remains of perfect beauty. Her eyes express the most engaging sweetness, and speak a disposition, such as I am told by Mr. Simpson it really is, gentle and benevolent to all around her. She too observed me, but it was in a manner the most mild and unassuming you can conceive. As she past us in going out of church, she spoke with great kindness to Mrs. Martha, and made me a most obliging curtsy, which I, you may believe, returned with one of my very best. Miss Smith her companion, paid me the same compliment. I walked both to and from church, yet was not in the least fatigued, though I could not but observe they gave wondrous good measure to their miles in this part of the world. Mr. Simpson did not return home with us, he always dining at the hall on a Sunday.

While we walked, I asked a few questions about Lady Beverly, as I found that

was a favourite subject for conversation with my companion. Yes madam, said she, on my observing I thought her extremely handsome for one of her age, that she is even now, as you say, extremely so; but dear me, miss, had you but seen her ladyship in the days of her youth, as I have done, you would have said she was a beauty indeed. But what, you know miss, is beauty without goodness?—It is a mere flower, a mere nothing, if not accompanied by a good heart and christian life, like her ladyship's: for she, to be sure, is a christian, if there be such a thing in this wicked world. It would take up an age of time to tell you half the good her ladyship does in this—aye and many other parishes. As for my brother and me, to be sure, we have reason, and do bless her name every day we rise. Was it not for her we should find it a very hard matter to make twenty pounds a year do as we do.

do. It is but a very small matter, miss, to bring up a family with any sort of credit, that's what it is.—You'll grant her this, Harriot, I presume without dispute.

I asked if her ladyship was a widow.—Yes, madam, said she, Sir Charles died when he was but a young gentleman, and left her all his fortune, which is very great. She had indeed a very large one herself: thof it was a love-match, for all that, as all marriages ought to be, to be sure that they ought. It is a sad case, added the sagacious Martha, to think how young folks are bought and sold, as a body may say, now-a-days. It was not always so, nor had we then so many unhappy couples as we have now.—But, as I was saying, theirs, to be sure, was a pure love-match. And so, as soon as poor Sir Charles died, and a comely young gentleman he was—I'm sure he has, many and many a time,

spoken as familiarly to me, aye miss, as familiar as thof I had been his equal, God forgive me ! as we say in my country.—Yes, madam, as comely a young gentleman he was to be sure as one shall see in ten thousand, aye or as many more, as my poor sister used to say. And so my lady resolved never to marry again, and many a deadly good offer she has had both from squire and lord, aye and justice of the quorum too, that's to be sure, but she was resolved, as one may say, and so refused. To be sure, you great folks must have a deadly deal of resolution to what we poor people have, or she could not, I think, ha' withstood e'm: but she did, and then resolved to spend the rest of her days at the hall, which she has ever since done to our great comfort. Aye, miss, would every family of rank and fortune follow her ladyship's noble example, how happy might thousands of poor folks be, that
are

are now miserable for want of such assistance. Why, madam, the very crumbs that fall from such great folks tables, as a body may say, would handsomely maintain some poor family.

In this manner did we converse, during our walk home, nor would the good Martha have been at any loss for discourse, I presume, had we been going a much longer journey, as the saying is.

In the evening her brother returned, and joined his praises to those she had bestowed on their generous friend.

He told me her ladyship had been enquiring about me, But, said the good man, I did not tell any particulars, thinking that might not be so proper, and therefore only said you was a young person that my Jenny had recommended to us, in order to lodge and board for a while during the summer. I thought, added he, if you chose to have her ladyship informed of any thing further,

you might do it yourself, as she desired me to tell you she would be extremely glad to see you at the hall. I expressed great satisfaction at his prudence, and not less for her ladyship's civility, and intend to wait upon her in a day or two, as her acquaintance cannot fail to render my situation more agreeable, nor can there be any fear of a discovery, distant as this place is from London. If she is, which I indeed do not in the least doubt, the amiable woman they represent her, I shall, if she seems desirous to know my name and affairs, make no scruple to inform her of both, as I am not fond of having any appearance of mystery in my conduct.

I expect daily to hear from Jenny, as I ordered her to write as soon as she had given warning. I am, you may believe, extremely impatient to know what past when I was gone.

Lady

Lady Beverly's coach, I protest! this is a civility I had no reason to expect.— Her companion too! I am however persuaded it is no impertinent curiosity has brought her here so soon. I will not go down till sent for, though I doubt the visit is to me.—O, I hear dame Martha on the stairs. Adieu, till they are gone; I will then give you my opinion, as I have already done that of the said dame.

* * * * *

Just gone, Harriot, and I am charmed beyond measure with my new acquaintance. It is impossible to imagine any person more affable and engaging: I mention affable, because, as she neither knows my rank nor family, such condescension is the more agreeable. That behaviour is not extraordinary from those who believe themselves your equal, tho' that does not always ensure it, but from superiors, how very seldom, my dear

Harriot, do we meet with the politeness and amiable behaviour so desirable in those with whom we converse? Haughty looks, and a ridiculous pride, are too often the companions of superior wealth, but I am persuaded she has no idea of this excessive meanness, for mean it is, whatever the good folks may please to think who study those forbidding airs.

Her voice and manner of speaking have something so soft so gentle and engaging, that one cannot but wish to gain her esteem. It is certain this was my desire from the moment she entered, and I believe I may, without any violent share of vanity, pronounce a favourable sentence, she did not express: and of that curiosity, which in fact would have been but natural, I rather fancied she came on purpose to judge whether I was in any degree worthy those civilities with which she wishes to treat every one in her neighbourhood. After an hour's agreeable

agreeable chat, in which Miss Smith had some small share; and, sorry I am to say it, gave me no reason to be so much prejudiced in her favour as I was in that of her friend. She does not seem of an agreeable temper, and I could observe she wished her ladyship had been a little more minute in her enquiries concerning my situation, and so forth: only a little female curiosity. They took their leave, desiring to see me the next day. Her ladyship offered to send her carriage; I thanked her, but assured her I preferred walking, as the distance was so trifling.

The good folks below are delighted with her civilities, as they hope it will enable me to pass my time more agreeably than I could otherwise have done. Had I not made this acquaintance, I should have been obliged to follow your advice and turn shepherdess, merely for want of employment. Indeed, in the

manner you have described it, I am not clear whether it would not still be the most agreeable; but, believe me, I might sing myself into a consumption before my voice, harmonious as it is, would have the surprising effect you mention; since I do not believe there is either a Collin or Damon, to answer your description, within a hundred miles of the said purling stream. The picture you have drawn, I confess, is pretty, and, on condition you will procure me a dozen or two of those rural swains to enliven the scene, I will resign my fan for the crook, and begin to warble the moment you inform me they are within hearing: till then all my chanting will be to no sort of purpose.

Adieu: believe me yours in whatever character, whether shepherdes or belle.

EMILIA BEVILLE.

LET-

LETTER XXXIX.

To the SAME.

THE most agreeable day I ever spent in my life! Nothing could be more obliging and polite than the reception I met with from Lady Beverly. I found her in her dressing-room with Miss Smith: they were busily employed in chusing some patterns for working a set of chairs. Her ladyship desired my opinion, I gave it freely, and, by my expression, they guessed I had some taste for drawing. I also acknowledged this.

I am extreamly glad to hear that, said my lady, as I shall want a little of your assistance; for though I have no genius myself, I can plainly see there may be great improvements made even in this I have made choice of. I assured her I would with pleasure either alter those or draw others, and in return begged she

would allow me the honour of working some of them, as it was an amusement I was particularly fond of.

A pretty reward you ask for your trouble ! said her ladyship, smiling ; but you shall with great pleasure be indulged in your request. But before we think of work, it will not perhaps be disagreeable if we take a view of the house and gardens : the day is fine and they are at present in tolerable perfection. I followed her and never was more charmed. The house is large and spacious, furnished in the most elegant taste you can imagine. A picture in full length of Sir Charles, proved Mrs. Martha to be a person of no small judgment in beauty, for never did I see a more graceful figure. Need I say more when I tell you I fancied there was a great resemblance between him and a Mr. Beauchamp, you have sometimes heard me mention?—His very eyes—as near as painting can express. The

The gardens are very extensive, and beyond description beautiful. Every kind of fruit and flower in the highest perfection. The house is situated in the midst of a noble park, which is well stocked with deer: there are some so tame as to feed from your hand. One in particular, the most beautiful creature you ever saw, follows my lady even into the parlour, and is already on very gracious terms with me. One seldom sees those creatures so tame. You may believe, I shall endeavour, by every means in my power, to cultivate his friendship.

Here too is a fine peice of water, in the middle of which is a small island, planted with flowering shrubs, of a thousand different kinds: a most elegant summer-house compleats the beautiful spot. To this we were conveyed in a small boat, ornamented in the neatest taste you can imagine, where we found
coffee

coffee and tea waiting our arrival. Need I tell you this voyage was performed after dinner? I really fancied myself transported to one of those enchanted islands of which I have read in the days of my youth, with so much surprise and delight. It is impossible to imagine any thing more charming. When we returned I again mentioned the drawing, but her ladyship would not suffer me to begin that day, as she obligingly said, she hoped I should not for the future be a stranger at the hall, if I found any thing there agreeable to my taste. In the evening she, with Miss Smith, accompanied me near half way back to my bower, conversing in the most agreeable and easy manner, nor once expressed the smallest curiosity to know more of my history than I seemed inclined to reveal. One thing of no small importance I had almost forgot to tell. There is a library filled with well chosen books in every language:

language: to this I am permitted to have free access at all times and seasons.

Now tell me, Harriot, have I not great reason to rejoice? Where could I have found a more agreeable retreat? The only painful reflection is that of my having been obliged to seek one: but since that misfortune was unavoidable, I rejoice most sincerely that I have been so particularly fortunate in my search, nor once look back to the world I have left, persuaded it is in retirement only one can find true and lasting pleasure.

Yet, is it possible, my dear Harriot, I should not, at some moments, sigh when I think of the amiable Beauchamp? When I consider the anxious suspense he must at present be tormented with? Ah, no my dear friend; let me confess he is, for my repose, but too often the subject of my thoughts.

Adieu: write to me immediately, and, if possible, tell me—yet, what Harriot
can

can you tell me in regard to him that can give me any consolation?—Again adieu.

EMILIA BEVILLE.



LETTER XL.

Miss HARRIOT MOLESWORTH, to
Miss EMILIA BEVILLE.

TILL I read your last I was not conscious of having any share of envy in my sweet disposition, but have been deceived, I find, as many a good creature has been before me. Yes, my dear, I am now persuaded I have a great deal: I feel the most violent inclination to indulge that gentle passion. When I meditate on your present delightful situation, I die to be introduced to your new friend Lady Bountiful, and to repose myself on the verdant banks of her enchanted island. I shall certainly be tempted

tempted to surprise you some fine morning with my unexpected presence.

I could no longer keep your secret from my mother and Charlotte, but, after a proper parade, and display of my importance, I unfolded, with great deliberation, your agreeable packet, and read it to them with all the necessary airs and graces proper for the occasion. Their surprise was inexpressible, nor did they find a more ready utterance for their joy. You may now comfort yourself with mamma's entire approbation, for which you have so often expressed such ardent wishes. Take it, my dear, and be satisfied: no more pining on that account. She declares, what you have done, is no more than she would have done herself, on a like occasion. That the proofs you once gave of your duty, and affection, and the sacrifice you so freely offered to make when their affairs required it, are enough; that

that that necessity subsisting no longer; their authority does not, in her opinion, extend so far as to force your inclinations, in a point of such infinite importance. There child, this speech from a mother may, I think, set your heart at rest, unless very restless indeed.

I have again received a letter from Mrs. Stanhope, but it is filled with more of her own affairs than yours; but no wonder, you will say, since she is certainly better acquainted with them. Woeful complaints of her spouse, and a thousand others, which you, Emilia, foresaw would be the consequence of her prudent marriage. Not one word of Emilia, she tells me, in spite of all the enquiries her father can make.

Take care, my dear, how you ramble without your friend Martha, or some other as able guard, for she declares Lord B— is set out on his travels, with
full

full purpose to find his lost nymph, without whom the good man can take no rest by night nor by day. Heaven only knows the route he has taken; but I cannot say I wish him to stumble upon yours, as I think his presence might chance to disturb the peace of your tranquil society. His genius is not formed to partake in your sentimental parties. No, my dear, I am afraid, should he come amongst you, he would totally overthrow your present form of government. It is true, it is about a thousand chances to one, whether he will be so fortunate in his search, but still it is in the number of possibilities.

Your family, she tells me, no longer suspect your being carried off contrary to your inclination, as they find you have taken a number of things with you that prove your flight to be voluntary. This, you may believe, adds considerably to their wrath and indignation. Should you
be

be found, mercy on us, what noble revenge is preparing! All their wits are at work. Poor dear Sir Joey too! — not dead yet—unwilling—very unwilling to resign his hopes. He had surely an amazing stock of that comfortable commodity when he first commenced your admirer, since they are lasting to this present hour.

Now a word or two of his nephew, and but a word or two, for of him she knows little, not having the same reasons to enquire that we have. She does, however, mention him, and that too in a manner tolerable enough. Says, every creature is raving at Sir Joseph, for not doing justice to the merit of his charming nephew, since the offence given by his family—if indeed given by them—was while he was absent, and of course could have no hand in the plot. She then describes him to me (not dreaming I have his picture drawn on my imagination

tion by a much more skilful painter) as the most accomplished, the most elegant, the most beautiful—Heavens, what a catalogue of perfections has she mustered up to raise my wonder and surprise! This she declares is the character given of him in all companies, and assures me it is perfectly just, she having seen him herself the other night at Ranelagh. But the best part of her history is yet to come. His eyes, my dear—every one pretends to be convinced by their peculiar languish, that he has left his heart abroad.—You, Emilia, have seen those eyes—pray my dear, is this too your opinion, or can you account for the said languish in any more agreeable manner? You may, when at a loss for meditation, take this singular case into consideration, and give me your thoughts upon the very important subject.

Would to heaven his tormenting—
and eke tormented uncle — was safely
deposited

deposited in his family vault! Who knows what might happen were he but well disposed of? And what can an old soul like him desire better, than to be released from the care and trouble to which every mortal man is liable in this wicked world?

I know not whether this curious epistle will afford you any violent satisfaction, but I have nevertheless told you all the news I have collected, or could collect. Not much, I grant, yet I think the report of the eyes may be looked upon as an article of some importance: so, reminding you of your obligation for that, I bid you adieu, and add to it, by assuring you I am wholly

Yours,

HARRIOT MOLESWORTH.

LET

LETTER XLI.

Miss EMILIA BEVILLE, to *Miss*
HARRIOT MOLESWORTH.

AH Harriot, what a fright!—I yet tremble with the remembrance of my astonishment and surprise! — Sure never mortal was so unfortunate as your poor friend! No sooner had I found as I thought an asylum, where, free from persecution, I might pass my days in peaceful retirement, till permitted to return to my family, than my retreat is discovered to be the most improper I could possibly have chosen.—Yes, Harriot, you will confess, when informed of my reasons for this exclamation, that my fears are but too just.

I was yesterday, as indeed I have almost every day been, at the hall: nothing can be imagined more agreeable than Lady Beverly; she not only gave
me

me a general invitation, but insisted on my being wholly with her for the rest of the time I mean to stay in the country: but what I am going to tell you has so entirely disconcerted my ideas, that I am not able at present to determine whether I shall accept or decline her obliging offer.

I yesterday went there in the morning. We were sitting with great composure at work, conversing on a thousand different subjects, and amongst others her ladyship was describing to me several gentlemen's seats which were within a few miles of hers, and with great politeness was proposing a party to see one she thought would give me pleasure. If to-morrow, said she, turning to Miss Smith, proves a day fit for our little tour we will carry Miss Beville to see B—castle. The ladies are there at present, and will, I am persuaded, be much obliged to me for procuring them
a companion

a companion so agreeable. This, and a thousand compliments equally polite, might at that moment have been paid me without raising in my breast one spark of vanity:—Yes, my dear, you may believe my attention was engaged on a very different subject. Good heavens! cried I with an emotion I could not repress, is it possible the seat you mention should belong to Lord B—? Their answer confirmed my fears, and it was in vain to attempt concealing my surprise, since it was but too visible. Her ladyship, with infinite sweetness, hoped I was not ill; though she rather fancied the name she had unluckily mentioned, was neither unknown to me nor indifferent. As my silence might have given rise to suspicions more to my disadvantage than the truth possibly could do, I made no longer any difficulty on what to resolve, but at once informed her of all the particulars of my perplexing situ-

ation. Her knowledge of my family could not possibly increase her politeness, as she had before treated me with the utmost respect, but it relieved her from any little doubts she might entertain in regard to my conduct, or reasons for living so retired. In return for the confidence I reposed in her, she assured me of her friendship and esteem, declaring she found nothing blameable in any thing I had done, and sincerely wished it in her power to prevail on my father to be less severe in his determination. She had heard of Sir Joseph, she said, and though unacquainted with his person, she was not so with his character, nor did she in the least approve the choice my family had made of a son-in-law. Of his nephew, you may believe, I did not speak with quite so much freedom as I do to you: I told her, however, as much as made her declare herself entirely of your opinion, for she will

not

not suffer me to despair, being persuaded my affairs will yet take a favourable turn, in spite of their present unpromising appearance; but these obliging predictions serve rather to convince me of her regard for my happiness, than to inspire me with any violent hopes. As for Lord B— she thinks I should have less chance of happiness with him than even Sir Joseph, were he inclined to change his publicly declared resolution and commence husband, a character she fancies he will never assume, if the lady who makes him her slave can be obtained without adding the chains of matrimony to those of love. She then said a number of civil things in favour of his present flame, assuring me she thought his liberty in more imminent danger now, than it had ever yet been.

Now, my dear Harriot, tell me whether I have not abundant reason to dread a discovery. Not that I think his

lordship will come to this part of the world in hopes of finding me, because he will naturally enough imagine I might know it was near his seat; but who will assure me he will not, in the course of those travels you tell me he has begun, pay a visit to his family *en passant*? Yes, my dear, notwithstanding this may not happen, yet it is probable enough to make me tremble with apprehension. For supposing his love should by this time be extinguished, a thing not unlikely, as a passion so over-violent is seldom of long duration; yet may not my family by his means be informed of my retreat, and, consequently, the hated persecution be again renewed? It is this I fear more than his lordship, since I have not the least suspicion of his turning knight-errant, notwithstanding the flourishing speech he once made on that subject. No, my dear, love has no longer any such power. I cannot say I have
any

any fears of that kind: my father and his highly favoured Sir Joseph terrify me infinitely more. Your wishes in regard to him are civil, I must confess: pity he did not know them, that he might return you thanks in form.

A letter.—It is from Jenny. Adieu till I have read it, you shall then know the contents.

To Miss EMILIA BEVILLE.

Honoured Madam,

I AM afraid, as I am but a poor writer, it will not be in my power to inform you of all that has happened since the day you left your family; but as you ordered me to let you know what was said of your flight, I will endeavour to obey you as well as I can.

O, my dear madam, you cannot think how I rejoiced that you went as you did; for who should come to town the very

next day, but your old lover! Pardon, madam, that free expression, but really I can hardly bear his name, when I think of the trouble and affliction he has occasioned in this family. I thought I should have died with confusion, when obliged to seem surpris'd at not finding you in your apartment, upon being sent to inform you his honour was come. But, O dear me! it is impossible to tell you how your papa and my lady raved, and what a violent passion they were in with each other about your being gone. As for Sir Joseph, he turned as pale as my apron with the shock, and at first would hardly believe but they knew where you was, and only wanted to break their promise; he was soon however convinced this was not the case, and, to confirm it, your papa swore a violent oath, that if ever you returned, and he should still think you worthy of the honour he intended you, he should
have

have you in spite of fate: I think that was his honour's very expression. Then they all began again. I would have given the world to have been with you, madam, at my dear father's. Every servant in the house was questioned with great severity: though, had they every one known as much as myself, there is not a creature amongst them would have uttered a syllable to your prejudice. No, madam, they have all, from the highest to the lowest, too much affection for their sweet young lady, as they always call you whenever they take the liberty to speak of you. Finding none of us could or would give any information, we were all dismissed, though not without a great deal of anger; and ever since your papa and Sir Joseph have been making enquiries all over the town as well as country, and they are now, I think, more determined than ever that you shall have him, if ever you are

found. Though if I might freely speak my mind, it seems to me more from anger and revenge in your papa, than for the disgrace, as his honour calls it, you have brought on his family by your undutiful behaviour. Excuse these expressions, madam, but you desired to hear all that was said. Sir Joseph too, I think, is sadly mortified at being twice so cruelly disappointed. To be sure, every body knows he doats upon you madam, but yet I believe if he did not, his rage and jealousy, for fear you should be gone off with somebody else, would make him obstinate in his pursuit, was it only to revenge the affront done to his passion. In short I don't very well know what to make of his behaviour, but his grief, bad as it is, does not give me half the concern as that of Mr. Beauchamp.

O dear madam, it is out of my power to tell you the condition to which that
sweet

sweet young gentleman is reduced. He has tempted me to tell him all I know about you, madam, not only with money, but the sweetest persuasions that ever were used. I do not mention these offers, madam, to make my silence the more meritorious, but only that you may thereby know the excess of his love, and the pains he endures from the suspense he is in about your situation. All the questions put to me by my lady or your papa were nothing, in comparison of his : I found no difficulty in keeping your secret from them, but, indeed madam, it was hardly possible, when pressed, as I have almost every day been, by that amiable gentleman.

I had almost forgot, while writing of Mr. Beauchamp, to tell you that Lord B— was almost mad with rage and disappointment, when informed you were gone. He made no secret of his passion, (indeed every body knew it long ago)

but swore and stormed most shockingly. He is set out, in order, as every body says, to search all over England for you rather than not find you. All this about his lordship I learnt from Madam Stanhope's woman. Ah, madam, how sorry am I to hear such sad accounts of her! But I beg your pardon for presuming to mention my reflections on what I hear: I hope all is not true that's said.

I have taken a place in the Fly, and hope to be with you, in less than a week. I am madam,

Your most obedient Servant,
to command,

JANE SIMPSON.

Nothing more than a repetition of what you, Harriot, told me before, except the damsel's reflections, on that sweet young gentleman; those indeed are new, and exceedingly pathetick, to do her justice. Poor Sir Joseph has but
a small

Miss BEVILLE. 107

a small share in her good graces, that's pretty clear.

Adieu, my dear friend, believe me sincerely

Yours,

EMILIA BEVILLE.



LETTER XLII.

Miss HARRIOT MOLESWORTH, to

Miss EMILIA BEVILLE.

I Know you would not forgive me, my dear Emilia, were I to conceal from you an affair that has lately happened: I am also sensible you will be greatly shock'd; but what can I do? were I to be silent, you might, perhaps, hear it in a more abrupt and unprepared manner. This consideration has prevailed on me to be the Messenger of a most unfortunate piece of news. But not to keep
F 6 you.

you in pain by suspense, let me at once inform you of what has happened.

Alas! my dear, your poor sister is in the most affecting situation. Mr. Stanhope is in imminent danger; there are scarce the smallest hopes of his life. Poor, unfortunate man! Indeed, my dear Emilia, the condition to which he is reduced, though almost the unavoidable consequence of his imprudent and faulty conduct, has yet given me infinite uneasiness. Yes, my dear, I really, with great sincerity, pity them both. But let me be more particular.

You have long known his intimacy with a creature belonging to the play-house, and I believe I also informed you she was at the same time mistress to Lord W——. The unhappy Stanhope was with her continually. Your sister was acquainted with the whole affair: it is too late now to enquire whether she behaved prudently or not. The creature,

ture, who is the cause of this misfortune, had, till within these few days, concealed from his lordship's knowledge her connections with Mr. Stanhope. By some accident their intercourse was discovered to him. He had been profuse in his liberality, and was, till then, persuaded he was master of her heart. How easy, my dear Emilia, do those artful creatures find it to impose on the man they not only do not love, but mean to ruin! His rage was boundless. To be supplanted in his fair one's affections, by one so inferior both in rank and fortune, was a mortification his pride could not support. A challenge ensued: they met in Hyde Park. Need I tell you what followed? Mr. Stanhope was desperately wounded; the surgeons are of opinion he cannot recover, though not positive in their determination. Think, my dear, what must have been Mrs. Stanhope's consternation, when he was brought home
in

in this condition ! Indifferent as they had for some time been to each other, it was impossible to be so at that dreadful moment. As he was persuaded he had not long to live, he endeavoured to apologize for his conduct, confessed he had been greatly to blame, said he deserved his fate, and was sorry to leave her in a situation so different from that in which he once hoped to have seen her. He wished much to see his uncle, in hopes the condition he was in might excite him to pity, and induce him to take your sister, who was not to blame, under his protection, in case he died. A friend was prevailed on to intercede with him : he met with a more gracious reception than any one had reason to expect. He was moved with the account the gentleman gave of his nephew's situation, and, after some faint resistance, accompanied him to make the requested visit. If he was moved at what he had been told, he

was

was infinitely more so, when he saw his once highly favoured nephew in a situation so dreadful. He no longer remembered his faults, he considered only the pleasure he used to receive in the hopes that he should one day become a worthy heir to his fortune. This hope again revived; they had not informed him of his being in extream danger; he therefore flattered himself he should yet recover, and rightly judging his forgiveness would be a remedy as powerful as any they could use, he with great tenderness assured him of it, and embraced your sister with the utmost affection. This, my dear Emilia, was the unexpected and happy Effects produced by the wish'd-for interview, and confirms, what I have often said, that he meant from the first to pardon his imprudence, when he had allowed him a sufficient time to be sensible of his error. It was not, you know, as if he had married into
a mean

a mean family or a person of bad character: your sister was certainly his equal, nor was any thing but fortune wanting to make it a very eligible match. As they managed the affair, it was certainly imprudent to the last degree, and for this, I say, his uncle, I suppose, intended to let him suffer a little penance. I am persuaded this was the case, from his being so easily prevailed on to see and to forgive him.

Your sister had the good fortune to please him: her behaviour to her husband was tender, nor did she express the least resentment, though sensible in whose cause the fatal accident had happened. She certainly, for once at least, acted a very wise part, as this mildness could not fail to have a proper effect on her new friend. Should he recover, and his uncle persevere in his present favourable sentiments, it is possible they may both reform, and for the future live in a manner more satisfactory,

factory, both to themselves and friends. On this condition heaven grant he may!

Your family were out of town when this affair happened, but were to return in a day or two: whether they will follow the forgiving example set them by Mr. Stanhope is uncertain; though I think they will even for their own sakes, as their daughter has now acquired so powerful a relation and friend. We shall see; a little time will determine that point, as well as the more material one of Mr. Stanhope's life or death: Do not, my dear girl, be too much affected with this unhappy affair: should he recover, we may yet have cause to rejoice that ever it happened.—Now let me say a word or two of your own affairs.

I cannot say I find myself much delighted with your being so unexpectedly in Lord B——'s neighbourhood; for though you express no fears on his account,

count, believe me I fear a great deal. I will not pretend to affirm that he will be mad enough either to scale your walls, or run away with you by force, if he can gain you by any less desperate means; but this I insist upon, that his present purpose is to have you either by one means or other: of this I am fully persuaded, from a thousand weighty reasons. Whether he will, during his excursion, visit his family, is a point I cannot so positively determine. That he will not do them this honour, in hopes of finding you, is, I grant, a very clear case. Yet, as it is a civility he is no doubt sometimes guilty of, who knows what may happen? This is the season for it. You say, his family are at their seat: Be on your guard, my dear, that's my advice, and the best I can at present give you. You only fear his lordship should discover your retreat to your family: I have my fears too, but of a very different

different nature. No, my dear, he will be the last person in the world, take my unerring word for it, to do them that peice of service. What I dread, and with much more reason, is, lest he should not only effectually prevent their information, but also that of another person, whose care and anxiety give me infinitely more trouble. I vow, my dear Emilia, it is as much as ever I can do to keep your secret. I really pity him more than you can conceive: more than you do it's very plain, and were I in your situation, I would at least let him know my banishment was voluntary, and not altogether without a view to his happiness. Pray now tell me, where would be the violent crime or condescension in this? You, my dear, may do as you please, I have only assured you what I in your case would undoubtedly do. I do not bid you tell him where you are, but merely why and wherefore.

wherefore. Think of these things, and may they make a proper and lasting impression on your heart.

I am in no small amaze at your abigail's fortitude. Had I been tempted as she has been, I have a shrewd suspicion—but adieu, no such good fortune awaits me, so you may be perfectly satisfied on this head, as well as that of my friendship and affection.

HARRIOT MOLESWORTH.



L E T T E R XLIII.

Miss EMILIA BEVILLE, *to Miss*
HARRIOT MOLESWORTH.

WHAT can I say to you, my dear friend? How can I express the shock I received when informed of Mr. Stanhope's fate? Ah, Harriot, can I think of his dreadful situation and not feel the most painful emotions? They were

were not, indeed, so much the effects of surprise as grief, since the course of life he has for some months been engaged in, could hardly fail to be followed by some as fatal consequence. Were he indifferent to me, were he not the husband of my poor Caroline, I should certainly be deeply afflicted, when I reflected on the cause of this shocking affair. Think, my dear Harriot, how dreadfully unprepared a man of his character must be to quit this life !

I rejoice sincerely at the account you give me of my poor sister's behaviour on the mournful occasion : should he recover, I flatter myself the accident may yet produce the most salutary effects. His uncle's renewed favour and protection may do wonders : heaven grant he may be restored to our wishes ! though, from what you tell me, I dare not flatter myself with that delightful prospect.

I am

I am dying with impatience for your next letter, that I may be relieved from my suspense. Write to me instantly, I beseech you, nor fail to be particular in every thing relating to my poor Caroline's affairs. My own are at this moment forgot, I can think of nothing but hers.

I find it impossible at this time to answer any part but this of your obliging epistle. Do me the justice to believe I have a due sense of the care you take in all that concerns me : your friendship is my only consolation.

Adieu. Be speedy, as you value the peace of

Your

EMILIA BEVILLE.

LET.

L E T T E R XLIV.

Miss HARRIOT MOLESWORTH, to
Miss EMILIA BEVILLE.

IT is past, my dear Emilia! The unfortunate Stanhope is no more! The surgeon's first declaration was but too just: there never were any hopes of his life. During the few days he lived, he seemed extremely sensible of his misconduct, and deeply afflicted for the crime he had been guilty of, in thus hazarding his life in a cause so infamous. He had the consolation to be reconciled both to your family and his own: had he lived, every thing would have been settled in the most agreeable manner, and his faults forgotten: but it was not the will of heaven. Let us not, therefore, repine; its decrees are ever just, though they may not always appear so to us.

His

His uncle has promised to look upon your sister with the same affection he would have done had his consent been given to their union. This circumstance will, I am persuaded, give you great pleasure. He has found the means to please him, and will, no doubt, endeavour to cultivate his promised friendship and esteem. The affection he once had for his unfortunate nephew, seems now transferred to her. Every one knew the cause of her husband's duel with my lord, and, of course, pity her on that account. Mr. Stanhope seems determined to make her all the reparation in his power for the wrongs she suffered from his nephew, and it is certain he can make her ample amends. What are her reflections on the event we will not enquire; they are believed to be such as they ought, by those whose opinion is of more importance than mine. Let that suffice, and may her future conduct

conduct give them no cause to change their favourable sentiments. One would think a scene so dreadful must have made a lasting impression on her heart: it must, my dear Emilia, if she ever truly loved him; though this, with me, still remains a doubt. Perhaps we ought to rejoice at her indifference, since it will save her from the infinite trouble and affliction she must otherwise have been tormented with. Forget, my dear Emilia, her unfortunate husband, since the remembrance can only serve to give you pain; and think only of your Caroline's good fortune, in being thus unexpectedly restored to the favour of her friends and family.

You bid me be speedy in sending my answer: I will obey you. I have nothing to add of any importance, and my usual trifling would, at this time, be impertinent.

Again I charge you not to give way to melancholy reflections.—Adieu: believe me ever

Yours,

HARRIOT MOLESWORTH.



LETTER XLV.

Miss EMILIA BEVILLE, to *Miss*
HARRIOT MOLESWORTH.

YES, my dear friend, I will be advised. I will, as you desire me, think only of Caroline's good fortune, in being thus happily reconciled to her friends and family. I will endeavour to forget the unfortunate cause of that happy event. My tears will not recall him from the grave, nor my reflections afford me any consolation. Yet, let me not forget the assurance of his sincere repentance; this circumstance cannot fail

fail to give pleasure to all who are any way concerned for that unhappy youth. If this repentance was indeed sincere, ought we to mourn his fate? Had he lived, he might again have been seduced. But let me leave this melancholy subject: why should I, by dwelling longer on it, give you pain? Nor indeed, do I find myself in spirits to write on that or any other. The anxiety I have been in ever since you first informed me of that unhappy affair has entirely depressed them. Lady Beverly omits nothing in her power to restore them, or to render my situation agreeable; but, alas, my dear Harriot, are there not a thousand reasons to prevent my enjoying with satisfaction those pleasures her ladyship is every day endeavouring to procure me? She has just left me, nor would suffer me to refuse the request she came to make. It is to accompany Miss Smith and her in a visit they are going

to make at a few miles distance from hence : her ladyship is persuaded a little exercise is absolutely necessary to remove that dejection but too visible on my countenance.

They are people of no ceremony, said she, and particular friends of mine. I mention this circumstance, my dear Miss Beville, that you may have no pretence to refuse me the favour of your company. Had it been a visit of mere form, I would not, at this time, have proposed it, as I am sensible it must have been particularly disagreeable ; but it is quite the reverse : we are intimate friends, and I am persuaded the ride will do you good : so, my dear, I will call for you about ten to-morrow morning, and expect to find you ready and in better spirits. If you disappoint me in either I shall be very angry. So saying she left me to write to you, as I told her I intended, and but for this I must have

have gone with her to the hall. I have not yet taken up my residence at that delightful place, though I am continually importuned to quit my humble dwelling. But however humble it may be, it is perfectly suited to my present taste: quite retired, and where I can indulge my reflections without fear of interruption: nor would I, on any consideration but her ladyship's obliging intreaties, be prevailed on to leave it. That I may have nothing to object, she has desired I will make no ceremony, but bring Jenny with me, who has been here some time.

What you say of Lord B— has really made no small impression upon me. I tremble, lest he should be ridiculous enough to justify your suspicions: I mean, should he chance to come this way. Yet I think were I indeed to meet him by accident in this part of the world, he would not use any violence,

lence, since, tho' he is persuaded I fly from the man I hate, he knows not he has also a favoured rival. Did he suspect this, indeed, I would not answer for what his pride might induce him to, after the ridiculous bustle he has made; but as it is, why should he use any other means than his eloquence and assiduity? These, from a person of his figure, I am persuaded, he thinks irresistible. That he is deceived is most certain; but of this, I say, as well as Mr. Beauchamp's passion, he is ignorant: why then have recourse to any other?

Ah why, my dear Harriot, do you tempt me with such plausible arguments? Ought I to write to that too amiable man? Would not this be giving him more encouragement than ever I mean to do, unless my affairs, take a more favourable turn? Have I not a thousand times declared I never will
marry

marry contrary to my father's inclination? Why then should I, by following your too tempting advice, give him those hopes which ever must be fruitless? Yes, my dear Harriot, the obstacles are innumerable: why then should I write? Will not absence prove an effectual remedy for his passion? Will he not in a short time, forget the unfortunate Emilia, nor feel any longer those pains and anxieties you would persuade me he at this moment endures? Yet, good heavens! should these dreadful predictions be verified, what would become of your forsaken friend? Ah, Harriot, did I really believe, what I affect to mention with such apparent indifference, I should die with grief. Jenny has told me a number of circumstances which add weight to those arguments you so sweetly urge in his favour: but I dare not, Harriot, indulge myself in the desire I have to obey you: I should blame

myself for it the moment I had given him this proof of my weakness; for would it not be extreamly so, to give him reason to believe I feared his despair might prove fatal?

Adieu, my dear friend, my heart is perhaps less at ease than his, yet I live. Do not tempt me then, I beseech you, to expose its folly by this too convincing proof.

Farewell. Let me hear from you soon, if you love

Your,

EMILIA BEVILLE.



L E T T E R XLVI.

To the SAME.

GOOD heavens, what a surprize!—
To give you my idea of it is utterly impossible: yet I am set down for that very purpose, or at least to tell you
the

the occasion of it, though I am really afraid I shall be able to do neither, so violent are my emotions when I endeavour to recollect the extraordinary scene.

Did I tell you of a visit Lady Beverly was going to make, and in which she desired me to accompany her? Last Tuesday was fixed for our little journey, but it proved rainy; we therefore deferred it till yesterday. About ten we set out in her ladyship's carriage, and found the way to Mr. Annesley's perfectly delightful. The road, except for about a hundred yards, quite a Bowling-Green: this we got over in going, without any great difficulty. For my part, I never suffer myself to be tormented with those ridiculous fears with which one sees so many people teizing both themselves and friends, when in a carriage. A stranger, from those violent apprehensions, would be inclined to think the lady who expressed them had

G 5

been

been more accustomed to walk than ride. This mortifying reflection one would think might prevent our sex from indulging airs they mistake for grace and delicacy.—But to proceed. I should not perhaps have mentioned that small inconvenience in our excursion, had we not felt the effects of it on our return.

We spent the day in the most agreeable manner. Mr. Annesley has two daughters, very amiable girls, nor is Mrs. Annesley less agreeable. Their fortune, though small, enables them, as they by their œconomy manage it, to live extremely genteel. They have no superfluous attendants, yet are served with more ease and readiness than those who keep five times their number. He has a small farm, just sufficient to amuse, and to supply the family with every necessary they can have occasion for. Miss Annesley has the government of the dairy, and her sister of the poultry, of which
there

there is a vast variety. Every thing both within and without the house is a perfect picture for neatness. Were I not in haste to inform you of what has occasioned my surprise, I might expatiate for an hour on the merit of this family, and the beauty of their little Eden ; but I now leave them, and set forwards on our return home, which we did about five o'clock.

I was expressing the pleasure I had received from my visit, and her ladyship, with her usual goodness, was beginning to inform me of a thousand circumstances in their praise, which I could not discover on so short an acquaintance, when we were in a moment terrified almost to death by the overturn of our coach, in repassing the piece of bad road I mentioned. How the accident happened heaven knows, but it fell with such violence that the coachman was thrown from the box to a considerable distance,

and bruised in a dreadful manner. I found I was free from any hurt, and screamed more through fear for Lady Beverly than for myself. Miss Smith had near fallen into a swoon, and certainly would, had not the servants immediately delivered us from our confinement: the air and her salts brought her again to herself, but it was not without the utmost difficulty her ladyship could recover her excessive fright. Had not the horses been remarkably tractable, the accident might have been attended with more fatal consequences; but, fortunately for us, they never offered to stir from the place where the coach fell. Her ladyship's first care was to enquire for the coachman, as she did not see him amongst the other servants; we were then informed of the hurt he had received. At first they feared he had broke his arm, but were happily deceived; though he was so extremely stunned

stunned and bruised with the fall, that it was impossible for him to drive us home, nor durst any of the other servants attempt it, after what had happened. We were about two miles from Mr. Annesley's house, but as that was nearer than any other, her ladyship determined to send a man back, to get one from that gentleman who could drive. A messenger was dispatched immediately, while we were obliged to seat ourselves on a bank by the road side till he returned. Our situation, you may believe, was none of the most desirable, as the poor coachman was an object that gave us great pain. He endeavoured to apologize for what had happened, by protesting it was not owing to want of care or attention, but merely the badness of the road. Her ladyship, in consideration of the hurt he had received, admitted his excuse, though I believe she was of opinion what happened was chiefly

chiefly owing to the want of both, since the road could not be so violently altered in so short a time: but the poor man was in a condition that banished every sentiment of resentment, and excited only that of pity.

With great patience and philosophy we sat waiting the return of John, and consoling ourselves with the reflection that, bad as our case was, it might have been infinitely worse. In this manner, I say, we were sitting with great gravity and composure waiting the servant's return, when who should ride up to the spot where we were, but Lord B—! that being the direct road to B—— Castle.

It was now my turn to use the salts. Her ladyship knew him at once, nor was in the least surpris'd at the efforts I made to hide my face, by drawing my hat over my eyes, and looking another way. But all these precautions were in vain, he discovered me in a moment.

Heaven !

Heavens ! cried he, with infinite transport, what do I see ? — Miss Beville here ! — What inexpressible joy has this unexpected meeting given to my heart ? Pardon me, my dear Lady Beverly, pardon me, repeated he, that I cannot regret (since I see you have received no hurt) the accident that has procured me this unspeakable felicity. He seized and kissed my hand, to confirm the thousand extravagant things he uttered ; and indeed I had not the power to prevent him, so astonished was I at the unexpected sight. He pressed it to his lips, swearing he would never, for the future, pass that spot, without expressing his gratitude to Providence, which had so fortunately ended his search and uneasiness, at that happy place. He had, for the first ten minutes, all the conversation to himself, so great was our surprise, that we had not power to interrupt him. It is impossible to tell you half the gallant things

things he said on the occasion, nor would he ever, I believe, have put an end to his eloquent rhapsody, had not my lady at last found spirits to change the subject which she saw was so painful to me. She, with great composure, not taking the least notice of all his fine speeches, enquired whether he was on his way, or had already been to pay a visit at the castle? His answers were given with the utmost confusion: he had no attention for any object but me, who would have given worlds to have been conveyed from his dreaded sight.

Pardon, Lady Beverly, cried he every moment; pardon this, to you perhaps, unaccountable behaviour. You know not, it is impossible you should know, the infinite joy I feel at this delightful moment. Ah, my dear madam, were you but sensible of the pain, the despair I have for some time past been tormented with, on this angel's account, you
would

would no longer be surprized to see me wild with joy. I love that dear creature—yes, madam, love her to distraction. Judge then what must have been my misery during that tedious time she has been absent, and what my extacy must be, thus to find her, when I had resigned myself to despair, convinced as I was my most diligent search would for ever be in vain !

In this manner did he continue his exclamations, while I had scarce power to utter one word. To the few questions I did find courage to ask, he made no direct reply, but again renewed his declarations of love, joy and felicity. At last, to my great satisfaction, John returned with not only a coachman, but Mr. Annesley and two or three other of his servants. You may, if you please, suppose the speeches that passed on all sides. He too knew my lord, though not the cause of that gaiety so visible on
his

his countenance, at a time when a face of concern would have been rather more natural. He did not, however, chuse to enquire into his lordship's reason, but no doubt thought his behaviour a good deal out of character. By Mr. Annesley's assistance we were enabled to pursue our journey, nor would he permit us to do so without his company, though my lord assured him he would protect the ladies from any further danger. Thus attended, we arrived at the hall, for her ladyship would not suffer me any longer to remain with the good curate. Mr. Annesley soon took his leave, not being able to accept my lady's invitation to stay all night, having an engagement early in the morning: half those intreaties, I presume, would have prevailed on his lordship, but she forgot to ask that favour. He would not, however, leave us till he was assured we had perfectly recovered our fright,

nor

nor could we persuade him we had, for near two hours after Mr. Annesley had left us. He asked a thousand questions, and expressed the greatest curiosity to know how I came there; whether I was only on a visit, or in what part of the country I had so long been; to all which I answered in a very unsatisfactory manner, telling him, my stay with Lady Beverly was extremely uncertain. I might leave her ladyship to-morrow, perhaps not so soon, I really knew not which, or whether I should do either. He did not seem much delighted with the information, nor could it give him any very clear intelligence of my design. He arose to take his leave of her ladyship; then coming to me, and half whispering, hoped he should have the happiness of finding me at the hall, when he returned with his sisters to pay his respects to Lady Beverly. I again assured him that was extremely uncertain. At
last,

last, he left us, with visible regret, to talk over at leisure the very unexpected meeting ; which we did, notwithstanding our fatigue, till near midnight.

Her ladyship thought I had nothing to fear from any ungenerous designs, as he had so openly declared his sentiments, and particularly as he was ignorant of my having a preference for any other. The knowledge of that circumstance, she owned, might perhaps induce him to take other measures, but added, she thought it very unlikely his lordship should be informed of it in the country, since he had never heard it even when in town. Again she assured me she thought his dread of marriage had forsaken him, and that he certainly meant nothing but to ask my hand as well as heart. Till she saw his behaviour, she had ever believed it impossible he should be so much changed as to think of entering into that engagement, but was

now

now persuaded his designs were honourable.

Ah, my dear madam, cried I, do not mention his designs, I have no desire to be acquainted with them, be they what they will. If they are, as you believe, honourable, I am obliged to his lordship for his good opinion, but my gratitude is all the return I have to give. I have not, my dear Lady Beverly, concealed my sentiments from you, you know the situation of my heart: if ever I bestow it on any man, Lord B——, I again repeat it, will never be the person. She smiled at the fervor with which I spoke, and assured me, she approved of my resolution, nor wished me to change, convinced, from what I had told her, that Mr. Beauchamp was infinitely more amiable and deserving; and repeated her flattering predictions that we should yet be happy.

With

With this agreeable reflection we parted for the night, having previously determined to send for Jenny and my wardrobe in the morning. According to this resolution, that damsel is now depositing my cloaths in the place appointed for them by my dear Lady Beverly, and it is in my new dressing-room I am at this moment writing to my dear Harriot. What will be the consequence of this interview I know not, but sincerely hope he will not inform my family or the vile Sir Joseph of the discovery he has made. Your opinion on this point gives me great consolation: I am endeavouring to believe you are right. He hoped I would still be here when he returned to pay his respects to Lady Beverly. How much is her ladyship obliged to him for his obliging intentions!

Adieu, my dear Harriot, this epistle is now of a convenient length. I will leave

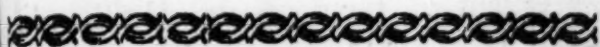
leave
on wh
at lei
per, a

Miss

N
tions to
much a
ployme
a thous
as many
prise.
times, a
ents to
gree th

leave you to make your own reflections on what I have told you : when you are at leisure you may commit them to paper, and send them to your affectionate

EMILIA BEVILLE.



L E T T E R XLVII.

Miss HARRIOT MOLESWORTH, to
Miss EMILIA BEVILLE.

N O, my dear, it is not possible for me to commit any of my reflections to paper. I am, believe me, too much astonished for any such sober employment. Not but I have made at least a thousand, and shall, I presume, make as many more before I recover my surprise. I have read your epistle fifty times, and as often talked over the contents to mamma and Charlotte. We all agree that he will not inform your family
of

of his good fortune, but cannot come into Lady Beverly's opinion, in regard to your safety, his honour, and all that. She, good woman, has no idea of this kind of men; she is not acquainted with the extent of their genius. I tell you again, he would have more joy in carrying you off, in spite of all your caution, and your Lady Beverly's care, than he would receive from the congratulations on his marriage. Take my word for it, my dear Emilia, he will never enter into that sober state. I am well assured he looks with the utmost contempt on all those silly souls who submit to that unfashionable yoke. As for his honourable views, I am persuaded he thought his brother Lovelace a very honourable fellow, and wishes for nothing more than a genius, fertile as his, at invention. I have often told you he had not half his capacity; but if he had, depend upon it, he would use it to the same laudable purpose.

purpose. That he loves you I am perfectly convinced, and I am as much so that he would venture his life to get you into his power. Whether he will be precipitate in his schemes I know not: I rather fancy the contrary, as he no doubt hopes to gain your heart by his repeated vows and assiduities, having no suspicion of its pre-engagement; that done, he takes it for granted his ideas of honour and yours will be easily reconciled. For is it not the odious opinion of every libertine, like him, that no woman can resist repeated sollicitation, if her heart has any degree of tenderness for the tempter? And his lordship is abundantly convinced of his own perfections; too much so, depend upon it, to doubt success. And that this is his honourable design, I make not the least doubt: so, as a friend, I advise you to be on your guard. Should I be deceived, I will patiently bear all you can

say on the subject of my sagacity. This wise lecture will, I hope, convince you I have, with all my might, been reflecting on your adventure; and if it does not also persuade you I am in the greatest care and anxiety about your affairs, it will but half answer the purpose for which I write it.

I have not heard from Mrs. Stanhope since I wrote to you last; but, by a letter I got last Monday from Miss Proctor, I find she is in high favour with her uncle, and makes a most elegant widow. Few people believe her sorrow extravagantly severe, though she behaves in a manner that contradicts this opinion. It is certainly her interest to do so, and I presume she has now learnt to think that a matter of some importance. She visits your family frequently, and her undutiful wedding is forgot. She will no doubt endeavour to please them better in her next.—But be it so—your days of felicity will yet arrive.

arrive. Yes, my dear Emilia, I add my predictions to Lady Beverly's: I again pronounce you will yet be happy—and not you alone, but also your handsome Beauchamp. In every letter I receive from London, let who will be the writer, I am sure to have a line or two about him.

I believe I told you what they say of his eyes: they are determined to believe nothing but that could make him treat the multitude of beauties he continually sees with such cold neglect and indifference.—Poor dear creatures! they are really to be pitied. A person so elegant, so formed for conquest, and yet so hard-hearted!—It is really, my dear Emilia, a most woful case to say truth.—He must as they say, have left the said heart abroad, or he could never treat them as he does. This thought, no doubt, gives them some consolation. Perhaps he is naturally insensible.—Is he Emilia? Do,

tell me, my dear, that I may set their hearts at rest, for some of them are, I believe, a good deal troubled with palpitations on your obdurate swain's account; as, hitherto, all their airs and graces have been displayed in vain. These hints may, I think, prevent your amusing yourself with any doubts in regard to his constancy, and with them I take my leave, repeating what I have a thousand times assured you, that I am wholly

Yours,

HARRIOT MOLESWORTH.



L E T T E R XLVIII.

Miss EMILIA BEVILLE, *to Miss*
HARRIOT MOLESWORTH.

YES, my dear Harriot, your very wise lecture has fully answered every purpose for which you did me the favour to write it. I am not only there-
by

by convinced you read my adventure with due attention, and as you read made many grave and sagacious reflections, but am also persuaded you interest yourself as much in my affairs as if they were wholly your own. Depend upon it I will pay all due reverence to your sage advice. What you say of his Lovelace principles shall not be forgot, I will, as much as possible, avoid seeing him. I have already had one opportunity.

The morning after our unexpected meeting, he came to enquire whether we had yet recovered our fright and fatigue. I saw him ride up the avenue: Lady Beverly received him alone. He asked after the ladies in general, then in particular for *Miss* Beville. Could he not, he said, have the honour of paying his respects to that divine creature? The ladies were gone out to take an airing, was her ladyship's answer, which she

believed was really the case, we having left her for that purpose, but changed our design.—Which way, madam? how long have they been gone? How extremely unfortunate was I not to meet them! Can your ladyship direct my steps that I may follow them? I have a thousand things to say to Miss Beville, which I am persuaded she will rejoice to hear.—That was impossible, as we had not mentioned which way we meant to go, but fancied we could not be at any great distance not having been long gone.—He took his leave in the utmost haste, determined, if possible, to find us. You may believe we were highly diverted at her ladyship's mistake, when I ran down on seeing him remount his horse.

I really blush, my dear Harriot, for Mr. Beauchamp's behaviour, and think the ladies you mention treat him with great civility, in making for him an
apology

apology so favourable. Might they not have accused him of stupidity, want of taste, judgment, and a thousand other as dreadful imperfections? They certainly might, after their repeated tryals to conquer his insensible heart. But then they are persuaded it is not insensible, his eyes it seems declare the contrary. In this lays the very mortification of which they complain. A cruel case, as you say, and wondrous pitiful. But what can be done? I will order a friend of yours to give him a word or two of advice on the occasion, lest he should, by persevering in this cruel behaviour, utterly destroy your present race of beauties.

Lady Beverly sends to desire I will accompany her in a walk. I cannot disobey her obliging summons, and as I have nothing very material to add will bid you

Adieu,

EMILIA BEVILLE.

H 4

LET-

L E T T E R XLIX.

Miss HARRIOT MOLESWORTH, to
Miss EMILIA BEVILLE.

LISTEN Emilia, listen my dear, with all your attention to the marvellous things I am going to tell you. Yes, child, it is now my turn to relate adventures. Such an adventure! my predictions are on the very point of being verified: the chief obstacle, or at least a very material one, is removed. Yes, my dear, your friend, with the languishing eyes, is now in as high favour with your old lover as he can possibly be with you. Have patience child, do not let your joy be too violent neither; he has not yet resigned his pretensions to you in his favour, not quite so civil as that comes to, but I tell you the accident which has conquered his ridiculous resentment is, I am fully persuaded,

suaded,

suaded, the forerunner of that desirable event. Are you prepared to hear with calmness what I am going to reveal? if not, say the word, and I am dumb.— Ah, Harriot, for heaven's sake speak on, as you value my peace! I am dying with impatience for an explanation!— O are you so? very well then, lest you should really expire with the said impatience, here follow the particulars. Your adventure with your over-turned machine is a trifle to mine. But to proceed.

Your dear Sir Joseph was last Tuesday returning from St. James's Coffee-house. He had not ordered his carriage to attend, having probably, when he entered that academy, intended to keep better hours than he happened that night to do. At what time he changed his noble purpose is not certainly known, nor is it more so, what could induce his knightship to sally forth on foot, there being

generally chairs enough in waiting at the door. These important points, I say, are not yet revealed to the astonished world, though most people are of opinion, champaign alone had been his counsellor, as it was well known they had, during the whole evening, been on the most friendly terms. Be that as it will, certain it is his valiant worship set out alone, fearless of either death or danger. It was—sorry am I to mention this circumstance, since it brings a friend of yours into the same scrape—It was, I say, Emilia, past three o'clock in the morning when he begun his travels for Bond-street. He had not proceeded far on his way, when he was met by two very ill-bred gentlemen, who, without the least degree of ceremony, demanded his purse, and, as an argument they had frequently, I presume, found prevailing, swore, if he refused, they would blow his honour's brains out. He, good man,

man, conscious that he was much better provided with one of these necessities than the other, found no violent inclination to dispute the point: his purse could easily be filled again, but a fresh supply of brains might not be so easily procured. Indeed, some folks are of opinion his honour did not chuse to give them so fair an opportunity to discover he never was possessed of any such matter. However that might be, he was in the very act of conveying his trembling hand to his pocket, on being again urged in no very soft, though very persuasive language, to be a little more speedy in his motions, when, who should at that moment over-hear their threats, from the other side of the street, but his nephew; that is to say, your friend Beauchamp. How he came to be strolling at that unseasonable hour is, as I before observed, a point not yet settled entirely to my satisfaction. Love, it is

true, might disturb his rest; he might chuse that hour when every eye ought to have been closed in sleep, as most proper to indulge his melancholy meditations free from interruption. This, I say, might be the reason of his being from home at a time for which we so freely blame his reverend uncle, who, to say truth, might, had he wit enough, plead the very same excuse.—I will leave you to form what conjecture you please, and proceed to my story.

He heard their threats, little dreaming to whom they were uttered, and, instantly flying across the street, with the hilt of his sword, at one well-aimed blow, knocked down one of the fellows. His companion seeing this, and willing to revenge the affront, endeavoured to return the favour with a more substantial weapon; but instead on Harry, his wrath by mistake, fell on the up-lifted arm of Sir Joseph, who seeing his design hoped to prevent it. The fellow
 thinking

thinking it not proper to make a second attempt, took to his well-disciplined heels, and left the field of battle without farther ceremony, as also his prostrate friend to the care of Providence. The watch coming by a moment after, they consigned their charge to him. But now comes the marvellous part of the history. Can you, my dear, form to yourself any idea of their consternation, when, by the light of the lantern, the heroes were discovered to each other? Harry, you may believe, thought his courage exerted in the most-fortunate cause that possibly could have offered. One's thoughts, you know, Emilia, are amazingly swift in their progress: perhaps he at that lucky moment made all the reflections, and drew the same conclusion from the adventure which I have done with so much confidence, in the beginning of my epistle. I'll lay my life your ladyship was the first person that occurred to his
memory

memory on seeing his uncle's wo-begone phiz, for such it seems it was, the blow on his arm having given birth to some very painful sensations, which were strongly pictured on his naturally-smiling countenance. But no sooner did he cast his rueful eyes on that of his deliverer, than his pain was lost in pleasing surprise. The champaign he had drank might perhaps help to banish from his unforgiving breast the remembrance of past scenes: certain it is he then seemed only sensible of the ^{of} present. He embraced him with infinite satisfaction, calling him his hero, the hope of his family, and the only fellow in it worth his notice or regard. You, continued he, have proved yourself deserving of both, and both you shall have, so give me your hand, and from this hour look upon me as your friend.—Your mother—but no matter—I am not obliged to forgive her, though I do justice to you, and justice I will do,

do, you may depend upon it. So saying, away they sallied with the utmost cordiality, arm in arm, nor would the old Don suffer him to leave him that night. The next-day found his worship still in those favourable sentiments, and the more he conversed with your swain, the more they were confirmed, nor will he now, on any consideration, be a day without his company. He insists on his living wholly with him, and in short, my dear girl, they have been a pair of inseparables ever since. Every creature is talking of this wonderful event, nor does any one forget to mention, with a proper emphasis, the valour of your hero.

Now, my dear Emilia, compare if you please your adventure with mine, and confess, with a good grace, that yours is not worthy to be related in the same age. Never was creature so happy as I have been ever since. Can I fail being so, convinced as I am that your days of banishment

nishment are so near an end? How this blessing is to be brought about I have not yet considered, but that it will be is not the less certain. Do, for heaven's sake, send him a line or two, or suffer me to do it for you: how else is he to know but you are by this time fled to the world of spirits, and consequently indifferent about either him or his passion? Till he knows, I say, what is become of you, how should he think of breaking the affair?—And yet, by the bye, I presume he thinks of nothing else. For my part I have no idea of your ridiculous scruples. Expose the weakness of your heart, indeed! I tell you it will, on the contrary, prove the gentleness, the softness, the goodness of it. Think on what I have said, reflect in your turn, and I am positive you must approve of my advice. Write to him, I repeat, or suffer me to do it for you. Take my advice, and that success may attend you, is the ardent wish of

HARRIOT MOLESWORTH.

L E T T E R L.

Miss EMILIA BEVILLE, to *Miss*
HARRIOT, MOLESWORTH.

AH, Harriot, what an adventure is yours! Yes, my dear, I do indeed confess mine is not worthy to be set in competition with it. Good heavens! how astonished, or rather delighted, was I, when reading the welcome packet! Do not expect me to give you any idea of my emotions: it is utterly impossible, nor was it less so to conceal them from Lady Beverly. She saw immediately I had received some agreeable news, nor did I wish to leave her ignorant of its nature. Sensible I could not tell the story with half the spirit you had done, I gave her ladyship your letter. It is difficult to say whether she was most charmed with the history, or with your lively manner of relating it. She is delighted

lighted with your spirit and vivacity, and wishes for nothing more than your sprightly company, to compleat our happy society. Yes, my dear, said she, returning me your epistle, I am quite of Miss Molesworth's opinion. I am persuaded the difficulty is more than half conquered. Sir Joseph's Love will yield to his friendship: depend upon it, it will, when he is once informed of his nephew's passion. The conquest will gain him infinitely more honour than he can ever expect from his perseverance. Your aversion, your partiality for another, his nephew's happiness, all these, depend upon it, will gain the victory, when he is acquainted with the particulars of the affair. Felicity he cannot expect, were he now master of your hand, convinced, as he will then be, your heart is another's. Till thus happily reconciled, his resentment would have been inducement sufficient for him to disappoint

disappoint his hopes, but that difficulty removed, he will certainly yield to his nephew's eloquence and importunity. I may be deceived, added she, but were Sir Joseph a man of sense and worth, this would undoubtedly be the conduct he would pursue. Ah, my dear Lady Beverly, cried I, you have now named the very obstacle which must for ever prevent that delightful hope. He is neither, my dear madam, he is only obstinate: his pride is piqued at my refusal, he is mortified and determined I shall suffer in my turn. Ah, what but this can induce him to persecute me as he does? I have a thousand times declared my sentiments with great sincerity, yet he perseveres in his odious purpose.

In this manner did we animadvert on every line as we read. It served us for conversation during the whole day, nor shall I want a subject for meditation, at least, till I hear from you again, and
you

you may believe I am not a little impatient for that favour.

Now, my dear Harriot, let me give you my own sentiments on this affair. Believe me, the more I reflect on this unexpected reconciliation, the less prospect I see of the effects you so obligingly predict. Yes, my dear, should Mr. Beauchamp disclose to him the situation of his heart, depend upon it, the present friendship subsisting between them, will vanish in a moment, and enmity, more irreconcilable than before, immediately take place. Will not my flight be imputed to him? Who will persuade Sir Joseph that my retreat was not concerted with his nephew? Is not every appearance against us? When he is once informed of my sentiments in his favour, who will be able to convince him of his mistake? And can he ever pardon the deception? Will not the whole affair appear to him a premeditated

tated scheme? He has no delicacy himself, and consequently will not believe others have a greater share. This, Harriot, is my real opinion of the matter. That I rejoice most unfeignedly at their present situation is most certain, but I dare not, my dear friend, be quite so sanguine in my hopes as your partiality for me makes you. Were I to advise, I should certainly be against Mr. Beauchamp's making the important declaration. Let the affair rest as it is: Providence has, hitherto, preserved me from that dreaded fate, let us then leave the event to time, nor, by a too precipitate discovery, entirely frustrate our hopes and expectations. Trust me, I know the temper, the teasing disposition of my tormentor better than even Harry does himself; at least I should judge so, were he to hope for any noble or generous action from him. Yes, my dear, the design he has once set his heart on, he will

will if possible accomplish, let who will be the sufferer. I have but too much reason to be convinced of this horrid truth. Now a word or two, by way of conclusion, concerning my noble lord.

Last Friday a message from the castle proclaimed a visit from the ladies and their gallant brother. In due time they arrived, and fine women they are, to do them justice. Nothing of the soft, the amiably winning, which I so much admire, but quite gay and town-bred. Do you ask what character his lordship assumed on the occasion? All life and spirit to the company in general, and, as often as he found an opportunity, as passionate and assiduous to me. The ladies, I presume, supposed his behaviour merely the effects of his natural gallantry, but he took no small pains to persuade me to the contrary. He did not fail to lament, in most plaintive strains, the dreadful disappointment he

met

met with when he had last the honour of waiting on Lady Beverly. I found he had no suspicion of my being at home, as her ladyship feared he would. I was persuaded he had too good an opinion of his own perfections to entertain a thought so mortifying. He expressed great curiosity to know how I came to honour that part of the country with my presence, and assured me, whatever were my reasons, he was thereby rendered the happiest man in the world. Implored me not to leave it with such secrecy as I had left London: another shock like that, would infallibly kill him. He had never known a moment's peace from that day, till the delightful one in which he had the unspeakable felicity of meeting me with Lady Beverly. But do, my dear, suppose the rest if you please: I am tired with the repetition, nor is it possible to tell you half the flourishing speeches his honour made,

made, but this I remember was the conclusion of the harangue: that he was, and long had been, my most devoted, and humble slave; that time nor circumstance could ever make him otherwise, with a long et cœtera of significant declarations to the same purpose, to all which, you may believe, I paid due credit and attention: though, whether I believe him or not, the consequence to his lordship will be pretty much the same.

Adieu, my dear Harriot, let me know what progress my two London swains make in their renewed friendship.

EMILIA BEVILLE.



L E T T E R L I.

Miss HARRIOT MOLESWORTH, to

Miss EMILIA BEVILLE.

SO, you will positively never forgive my long silence? Why then should I now take up my pen, since you will

of course, commit my poor trembling epistle, without mercy, to the flames? Do so my dear—but do you hear, Emilia?—read it first, for it brings you the most joyously ridiculous piece of news you ever heard. The prettiest scheme! Nothing wanting, child, but your consent and another person's, who shall at present be nameless. This dear good soul Sir Joseph, can think of nothing but matrimony: he is dying for want of a wedding. Listen my dear: but don't be silly, Emilia, don't be ridiculous, nor look grave, even for half a moment, at what I am going to impart.

I need not remind you how many months our Caroline has played the widow: long enough in all conscience; long enough, I mean, for her friends to be talking of another spouse for her. — True, as you are alive! Now you are to guess who her next deary is to be, as the provident world says.—

Again I charge you, don't be ridiculous.
—Only Henry Beauchamp, Junior Esquire. Yes, my dear, so says Sir Joseph, so says your dear papa, and so says your Caroline's dear uncle Stanhope; for this pretty plot was concerted by those three wise heads: by whose it will be *disconcerted*, I'll leave you to guess. Don't, however, imagine the day is fixed and all that—not quite so fast neither; but the venerable triumvirate are of opinion that such an alliance will do mighty well. Sir Joseph, you know, is to marry you, and so, my dear, as his nephew may perchance be disappointed, in regard to being his heir, why the very considerate old gentleman means, by this match, to repair the said disappointment: and secondly, Mr. Stanhope, in consideration of what your sister suffered, while under the care of his hopeful nephew, has consented to make her worth his acceptance. Thirdly and lastly,

lastly, your papa agrees to the whole without a murmur, since nothing is required on his part, except the continuance of his promise in Sir Joseph's favour, should you return.

Thus have I given you the whole plan of their operations, as far as they are known or guessed at. Neither the nymph or swain are yet consulted, but there is no doubt of their consent, you know. You I think can answer for one, and I promise you I can answer for the other. I have time for no more, having company below, but could not delay sending you this entertaining piece of intelligence.

Adieu. Remember I write it merely to divert you: should it have any other effect, it shall be my turn next to be offended.

Yours,

HARRIOT MOLESWORTH.

L E T T E R LII.

Miss EMILIA BEVILLE, *to Miss*
HARRIOT MOLESWORTH.

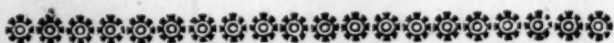
AH, Harriot, can I smile? can I indeed read with indifference the frightful news you tell me? Good heavens, my dear creature, should the affair you mention with so much unconcern be true, what but misery remains for your forsaken, your wretched Emilia? Unlikely as their design may appear to you, who can ensure me it will never succeed? Were I present indeed—but, alas! he knows not, as you yourself confess, whether your unhappy friend is any longer in being! A thousand circumstances concur to render my apprehensions too just. Caroline is handsome, her fortune you tell me will be considerable. Ah, Harriot, these are powerful temptations! Indeed, my dear friend,

friend, I cannot smile : I own my weakness, for such you will no doubt call it. Yes, my dear, I own I cannot conquer my fears : they may be ridiculous, but I feel them, nevertheless. Ah, hasten, I beseech you, to restore my peace ! I have nothing to write, nothing to tell you worth your attention. Lord B— is here continually, he teazes me to death. His importunities fatigue my spirits. Why cannot I acknowledge to him I have no heart to give ? Surely, that would convince him his hopes are vain. He might then be persuaded to desist from his fruitless pursuit. Nothing but this will induce him to believe he cannot in time conquer my indifference. He has too much vanity to doubt it, believing, as he does, I have no pre-engagement or partiality for another. Alas, Harriot, how different are the effects of this reconciliation likely to be, from what you would have persuaded me to expect !

Ah, my dear, my heart refused to obey : it knew the misery I was born to suffer. I can write no more : what I have already written will give you but little pleasure.

Adieu. For heaven's sake, do not so long neglect me as you have lately done, but relieve me from this tormenting suspense : the certainty, whatever it may be, can hardly be more painful.

EMILIA BEVILLE.



L E T T E R LIII.

Miss EMILIA BEVILLE, to *Miss*
HARRIOT MOLESWORTH.

WOULD you believe it, Harriot ? *Miss* Smith has absolutely betrayed my secret to Lord B—.

I, with Lady Beverly, had the other day been taking an airing : *Miss* Smith declined going. When we returned, I found

found his lordship and her in deep discourse, but little imagined what had been the subject of their conference. I did not long remain a stranger to it, for at his next visit I found he was acquainted with the whole affair: nor did he fail to upbraid me with cruelty, insincerity, and a thousand other impertinent complaints. He has ever since, till within these two or three days, behaved like one distracted. One moment in despair, the next vowing revenge on his favoured rival. He will lose his life sooner than resign his hopes. In short, I am now very seriously alarmed, nor is Lady Beverly less so, notwithstanding the change he has assumed in his behaviour: he is, to appearance, quite resigned, all resignation. Complains, indeed, of my severity, but must endeavour to bear his fate: his death will soon end his misery, and this is all his consolation. A behaviour so unlike himself,

the change too so sudden from rage to this philosophick calmness, gives me but too much reason to doubt its sincerity. Lady Beverly has given Miss Smith a reproof which does not sit extreamly easy upon her. She has not once since that lecture favoured me with a smile. I have not yet determined on any thing, but am persuaded this is no longer a place of safety. Do, for heaven's sake, Harriot, think for me : advise me what is best, or whether you think I have any grounds for my apprehensions. Yet I am persuaded you will, as you have ever been suspicious of his intentions. Till this discovery, I own there did not appear to me any cause ; but the scene is now greatly altered.

Adieu : I can write no more, this will suffice to direct your reflections. I shall, with infinite impatience, expect the result of them. Do, my dear friend, consult

felt your mamma, nor fail to let me know your sentiments on the affair as soon as possible.

Yours,

EMILIA BEVILLE.



L E T T E R L I V .

Miss HARRIOT MOLESWORTH, to
Miss EMILIA BEVILLE.

O That vile *Miss* Smith ! You must positively leave Lady Beverly, you are no longer safe under her protection. I told mamma what had happened, and of the violent bustle his lordship made. She is entirely of my opinion that you ought to leave the hall immediately, and orders me to tell you, she insists on your giving her the pleasure of your company till we see how things are to be settled. No more excuses, therefore, but set off instantly. Need I tell you how impatient

178 *The* HISTORY *of*

tient I shall be for your arrival? Her ladyship, I am persuaded, cannot blame your precaution. She may regret her loss, but must see the necessity there is for your journey. In my opinion there is an absolute one for your being both speedy and private. I may be deceived, but it will be erring on the safe side.

Did I not tell you I never would pardon your folly if you expressed any degree of uneasiness at the pretty news I sent you? Depend upon it, I mean to keep my word: all your apologies will be in vain. In vain will you implore forgiveness for your ridiculous fears. While I only meant to amuse you with the folly of the town, not forgetting that of your good family; behold you are dying, despairing, and so forth, lest your swain should—what I'll answer for it he never will—forget all his vows of unalterable love.—Ridiculous! I tell

you

you it is not in his power. No my dear, those who have once been your slave, have but small chance of ever regaining their liberty. But what is still a greater security, the youth has no desire to break them: nor could even your eloquence, I give you my word, prevail on him to accept his freedom. But you are so desperately fond of indulging those melancholy reflections! However, you will in a few days, I hope, be under my own eye, it shall be my fault then if you pay any more regard to those silly stories than you ought, or they deserve. If you do not instantly accept mamma's invitation I will absolutely dispatch a line or two to a certain person, and at once deliver him from all his fears and suspense on his fair fugitive's account. I am positively serious, so chuse which you will.

Adieu. I am too impatient for your company to occasion any delay by length-

ening my epistle : be you as considerate,
as you value the friendship or fear the
wrath of,

Your

HARRIOT MOLESWORTH.



L E T T E R L V.

Miss EMILIA BEVILLE, *to Miss*
HARRIOT MOLESWORTH.

GOOD heavens ! my dear Harriot,
by what an unfortunate, unexpected accident was I prevented from seeing, as I so fondly wished, your amiable family ! I yet tremble when I reflect on all that has passed since the fatal day I parted from my dear Lady Beverly. Till now I have found it impossible to give you the particulars, though I so impatiently wish you to be informed of the dreadful change in my situation. Ah,
my

my dear Harriot, you know not what I have suffered since that unfortunate day!

On the Tuesday, as I informed you was determined, I left the hall, accompanied by her ladyship's woman, and a servant on horseback, Jenny having desired permission to continue a few weeks with her father, who has lately been extremely ill. His lordship had been with us the day before, as indeed he was every day. He still continued his calm, resigned behaviour, though it was easy to observe, by a thousand inadvertencies, that he was not in reality the philosopher he appeared. Why he chose to assume a character so new, we could not determine, but were every hour more persuaded it was not without design to answer some important purpose. If he meant thereby to prevent our entertaining any suspicions of the vile scheme he had in fact concerted, his lordship was deceived, since it hastened my resolution

to

to leave the place where he was. How I succeeded in my purpose, I am now going, if my spirits will let me, to tell you.

He took his leave, promising to return the next day with his sisters, with whom, and some other company, we were to form a party for fishing. This engagement, you may believe, did not prevent my intended journey. I left Lady Beverly with infinite regret, nor could any thing, but the hopes I then had of seeing my dear Harriot, have dispelled that melancholy which filled my heart when I lost sight of that hospitable abode.

The weather was remarkably fine, and for the first day I had reason to believe I should receive great pleasure from my journey; but we had not drove many miles, the next morning, when I observed a man who frequently passed our chaise, and whose manner made me conclude he meant to rob us. I expressed my fears to my companion, who assured me
there

there was no kind of danger, as things of that sort did not happen thereabouts once in an age. Notwithstanding this, I was very much alarmed, and the more so, as we were just entering an extensive common, a place of all others most likely to meet with such an adventure. I was so intirely persuaded this was his design, that I had almost reasoned myself out of my fears, and was tolerably prepared to obey the expected commands; but a few minutes relieved us from our apprehensions. We saw a chaise following at a trifling distance: this gave us new life, and we were diverting ourselves with the man's disappointment, if he had really any such design, when, in a few moments, our carriage was stopped by one of those very people whose appearance had given us so much satisfaction, and I was instantly, in spite of all my tears and struggles, hurried, more dead than alive, into the chaise I had before seen.

seen. It drove off like lightning, nor can I give you any account of what was my companion's fate, as it was a considerable time before I recovered from the swoon into which my terrors had thrown me.

Can you, my dear Harriot, form to yourself any idea of my dreadful situation, or my distraction, when I shall tell you, that on opening my eyes, the first person I beheld was the vile, the ungenerous Lord B——, seated by my side? He held one of my hands, and was endeavouring to calm my fears by a thousand hateful protestations. I had not power to give him any answer, but faintly screaming with terror and astonishment, again lost my senses, nor can I tell you how long I remained in that condition. Ah why, my dear friend, am I not still in that happy insensibility! Infinitely happy, when compared to my present miserable situation! But my days
of

of sorrow were not to end so soon: I was again restored to life and wretchedness. I found myself on a bed, surrounded by several mean looking people, who were, with great care and tenderness, endeavouring to assist his lordship in recovering me from my swoon. Thank heaven! cried he, when I began to breathe; thank heaven, the dear creature lives! How excessive must have been her fright! But leave us now, my friends, I hope your assistance is no longer necessary: you may go. Ah, for heaven's sake, exclaimed I with wildness in my looks, do not forsake me, do not leave me in the power of this vile man! Save me, ah save me, from his dreaded presence! O do not go! Hear me, I beseech you, and do not, by your absence, drive me to despair! Leave us, said he, with great composure; her spirits are not yet calm: a few moments will restore her to peace. They withdrew with
apparent

apparent regret, but overawed by his repeated commands. Again he offered to take my hand. Be composed, my lovely creature, cried he; hear me, suffer me to explain myself, permit me to give you my reasons for what I have done: do not condemn me unheard. Ah, my charming Emilia, you will rather pity than blame me, when informed of the motives which induced me to act as I have done. You know not, my angel, with what ardour I have long loved, long adored you. Ah, could I then tamely resign those inimitable charms to the fond wishes of another? By heavens, my cruel, my unkind Emilia, death would have been infinitely less dreadful than such a sacrifice. Yes, my adored Emilia, I love you with a passion more fervent, more sincere, than ever yet possessed the heart of man. Tell me, could I then resign you to the happy, the envied Beauchamp?—Ah, he is now but

too happy, favoured as he is by the most lovely of her sex! — Impossible! — By heavens I would not, to be master of the universe, give up the delightful hope I have so long cherished, of one day calling you mine.

And can you, my lord, cried I interrupting him, can you believe this the way most likely to succeed in that design? Is it possible you should have the vanity to persuade yourself I would ever consent to give you my hand, after this base, this ungenerous treatment? No, sir, whatever you may resolve upon, whatever may be your present honourable intentions, be assured I shall ever look upon you as the most worthless and despicable of your sex. I am, indeed, in your power, but take care, sir, how you exercise that authority you have so meanly acquired: I have friends, who will not tamely suffer me to be injured. Here my spirits forsook me, and tears, in spite
of

of all my efforts to restrain them, ran streaming from my eyes. I did not wish him to know the excess of my fears.

He threw himself at my feet, nor could I prevent his pressing my almost lifeless hand to his lips. It was with difficulty I kept myself from fainting. He again began to apologize for his behaviour, assuring me I had nothing to fear from that power I so cruelly mentioned: all he meant was to prevent my marriage with his too fortunate rival. Promise me, said he, my charming Emilia, that you will never give your hand to that happy man, and I will patiently wait till I can, by my constant, my unremitted assiduity, gain that place in your heart I once flattered myself I already possessed. Tell me you will forgive my —perhaps too rash— step, which love alone induced me to take; say you will forgive, and suffer me to hope that time, and the fervor of my passion, may produce

duce some favourable change in your sentiments ! I cannot, my lovely creature, by heavens, I cannot support your indifference. You need not fear it, my lord, interrupted I. Believe me, my heart is not so insensible to wrongs, as to look with indifference on the person who could treat me as your lordship has done : No, sir, depend upon it, I shall ever retain a due sense of your exalted merit. He was going to reply, when a servant entered to inform him the chaise was ready. He immediately arose, and taking my hand, would have led me to it. I struggled, screamed for help, implored him in the most moving terms not to kill me with terror : I would die, I said, a thousand deaths rather than be again in his power : but all my efforts were in vain, no one heard or regarded my cries, and I was conveyed to the carriage, which instantly drove off with incredible swiftness. In this manner we travelled

travelled for several hours, without meeting a creature from whom I could implore assistance; for this I was determined to do, from the first person I saw. I took care not to let his lordship see my design, lest he should endeavour to prevent it. My prayers at length were heard.

We had just past through a small village, where I had in vain tried to alarm the inhabitants with my cries, when I saw a post-chaise coming towards us, attended by several servants on horseback. I was determined if possible, to make myself heard by some of them. My lord seemed to suspect my design, and appeared irresolute on what to resolve. I said not a word till within hearing, lest I should confirm his suspicions, but no sooner were they within the reach of my voice than, collecting all my force, I gave a violent scream, and, in the most moving terms, implored them

them to help a poor distressed creature, who was forcibly conveyed from her friends, and whose ruin was unavoidable, unless rescued from the power of him who had thus cruelly used her. I continued my cries, in spite of all his efforts to prevent me. My voice reached them, they drove up, his lordship leaped from the chaise, as did my deliverers from theirs. But ah! my dear Harriot, who can describe my astonishment, when I discovered them to be Sir Joseph and his nephew, the amiable Beauchamp? The surprize was too much: my spirits, which were before almost exhausted, now entirely forsook me, I had only power to call in a faltering voice on his name, and instantly fell senseless down in the chaise. Whether he heard me I knew not, nor can I tell you what passed during my swoon. But imagine, if you can, what was my unspeakable joy, when recovered from that insensibility,

bility, to find at my feet my no less delighted and astonished deliverer!

They had conveyed me back to the village I mentioned, not thinking it proper to determine on any thing till I was able to join in the consultation. My first words were all confusion and disorder: the terror in my looks gave the amiable Beauchamp infinite pain. He, with a softness, a gentleness no language can describe, endeavoured to remove my fears, assuring me I was no longer in any danger: he would preserve me at the hazard of his life. Then, pressing my hand with transport to his lips, entreated me to be composed and depend on his protection, who only wished to live that he might convince me how inexpressibly dear I was to his heart.

Can you, my dear Harriot, conceive my joy, or the excessive pleasure I felt, on being delivered from my frightful situation, and that too by the only man

on

on e
ed?
on
pass
cam
had
teref
possi
to th
At l
a hu
he ha
quite
self li
had
mean
instan
oblige
defenc
Judge
ther I
his fu
fight!
Vol

on earth to whom I wished to be obliged? It was long before I could prevail on him to inform me of what had passed, during my swoon, or how I came to be conveyed to that place. He had so many pleasing, so many more interesting things to say, that it was not possible for him to give any attention to the question I every moment asked. At last, however, though not without a hundred interruptions, I learnt that he had wounded his lordship, who grew quite outrageous, when he found himself likely to be robbed of the prize he had obtained by such unjustifiable means. On seeing Mr. Beauchamp, he instantly drew his sword, who was then obliged to follow his example in his own defence. At that moment he saw me. Judge, my lovely Emilia, said he, whether I was likely to be more cool than his furious lordship, after that animating fight! Any one, in your situation, had

VOL. II. K a right

a right to my assistance ; what then must have been my emotions, when I found the cries which had alarmed me were uttered by my long-lost, my adored Emilia ! We fought : my lord was slightly wounded, and is by this time some miles on his journey. Where he means to go, I know not, but I took particular care to have him properly attended.

Till that moment, I had forgot—so great was my joy and surprise—that I had also seen Sir Joseph. This thought gave a damp to my transports, and a thousand tormenting fears again took possession of my heart. I hastily enquired of Mr. Beauchamp what was become of him, yet trembling to hear his answer to my question. He told me his uncle was then in the house, but had, in stepping too hastily from his chaise, sprained his ankle, the pain of which was so violent, that he was
unable

unable to move without the utmost difficulty. Need I tell you, my charming Emilia, continued he, that the greatest mortification he receives from the accident is, his not being able to attend his still adored angel? Ah, who that once has loved the amiable Miss Beville, can ever hope or wish to regain his freedom? Impossible! Yet, on this hope alone, depends my future peace and felicity. At that moment, a servant informed him Sir Joseph desired to see him. He left me Harriot. Need I say it was with infinite regret, tho' but for a few minutes?

It was now I had time to reflect on the amazing adventure I had just met with. Though I had great reason to be thankful for my deliverance from Lord B—'s power, and was inexpressibly so, yet was it possible, my dear friend, not to be tormented with a thousand apprehensions on Sir Joseph's account?

I had just been informed of his horrid constancy: what then had I to hope? Nay, had I not every thing to fear from his hated persecutions? He was still a stranger to his nephew's sentiments, nor was it likely the knowledge of them would produce any very agreeable effects. My reflections did not in the least contribute to restore my peace: on the contrary, when my deliverer returned, he found me overwhelmed with melancholy and dejection. The dread of seeing my family, to whom I was now to be conveyed (for was it possible to make, with any hopes of success, any other proposal?) gave me inexpressible uneasiness. I was really in terrors at the thoughts of meeting them, after all that had happened, yet saw no possibility of avoiding it.

He informed me, Sir Joseph was preparing to pay me his respects. Do not be alarmed, said he, with infinite tenderness,

derness, on observing my emotions, at the mention of his justly dreaded name : hope with me, that he will be more generous than to persevere in a design which he sees so extremely disagreeable. Ah, my lovely Emilia, what but this sweet hope could preserve my life ? Plead with him to save you from the commands of your too obstinate father : use all your soft persuasive eloquence, while with him on your journey, to convince him you must be miserable, unless freed from his addresses. Can he resist ? Is it in nature he should not yield to such gentle, such moving entreaties ?— Yet, will not that display of your inimitable graces more deeply wound that heart you mean to set at liberty ?—I know not what to advise, but, thank heaven, you are again restored to my longing sight ! That heaven will, I trust, remove the obstacles that at present distract my heart. Tell me, my adored

Emilia, say, will you never yield your hand, however you may be pressed on the dreadful subject? I had only time to give him my hand, accompanied by a look that fully answered his important question. His uncle that moment entered the room.

It is not in my power to describe to you his ridiculous behaviour. What with the pain of his sprained ankle, and the joy of seeing your poor terrified friend, his face expressed the most extraordinary emotions you can possibly conceive. He kissed my hand with amazing rapture, and would, I presume, have thrown himself at my feet, had he been able; but, thank heaven, he was not in a condition to be so extremely gallant. Much was said of the unexpected meeting, and as much on the cruelty of my impenetrable heart: all which you may, if you please, suppose, in whatever words you think most suitable

suitable to the occasion. But for the accident I met with in quitting my chaise, said he, casting a most wo-begone look at his wrapped-up leg; that vile Lord B— should not have escaped my just vengeance: his life should have paid for the outrage he has been guilty of. But my nephew has, in some measure, punished his presumption, nor do I believe he will again be in haste to incur my displeasure.—But to shorten as much as possible this tedious story.

You may now, if you please, imagine me seated by his side in the chaise, and driving with all convenient speed to London. As we approached our part of the town, I was in the most painful agitations, but when we stopped at our door, I really thought I should have fainted: I could scarce breathe, my heart beat, nor was it possible for me to stir without assistance. Fortunately for me, neither my father nor mother was at

K 4.

home.

home. I was led into the house by my limping companion, who, after a thousand flourishing speeches to me, and whispering something to my mother's woman, who came to receive me, he took his leave, returning to the chaise in violent pain. She saw I was ill, and immediately got me some drops. This gave me some relief, and I found spirits to ask her a few questions about my family, which she answered with amazing volubility, and would have continued talking till now, had I given her the encouragement she wished. My affairs were a copious subject, and my voluntary return, as she no doubt thought it, puzzled her not a little.

O miss, said she, how pleased will my lady be with this change in your inclinations! You cannot think what a violent bustle and to do, your elopement made in this family: but your return will make every thing easy, all that's
past

past
Sir
not
ed
thou
cruel
now
lieve
so u
since
rejoi
othe
your
may
lady
that
thou
why
do y
I th
othe
sure
yet

past will be forgot and forgiven. Poor Sir Joseph! O dear me miss, you know not what that good gentleman has suffered on your account! Indeed I never thought he would have survived his cruel disappointment; but he seems now all happiness. I was, you may believe, miss, astonished to see you return so unexpectedly with his honour, but since I see it is your own free will, I rejoice at my very heart, for I see no other way to restore peace here but by your marriage. Mrs. Stanhope too—may be ma'm you haven't heard of her ladyship's intended match—not, indeed, that I think, it will ever come to pass, though it's so much talked of. And why, cried I with too much emotion, do you think it will not? Why, miss, I think the young gentleman's heart is otherwise engaged, nay, I am pretty sure of it. It is true, they have not yet asked his opinion of their design,

but I think he knows it, and rather fears than wishes to be more particularly informed or consulted.

This gave me some consolation. I found my mother was not to sup at home, and being excessively fatigued both in mind and body, determined not to see them that night. I wrote a note to prepare them for the unexpected interview, and to apologize for not paying my respects to them 'till the morning. This I ordered the maid to deliver the moment they came home, and then retired to my apartment. In vain I endeavoured to rest, sleep fled from my eyes, in spite of my fatigue, nor did I close them till near five in the morning.

I was up by eight, finding it impossible to rest, and sat in agonies not to be conceived, waiting for the dreaded interview. I wished, yet trembled at the thoughts of a meeting. I would have given worlds to have had it over. I endeavoured

endeavoured to imagine all they would say, and prepared my answers in the best and most satisfactory manner I possibly could. I had not courage to go down without being sent for. My breakfast was sent up, and about an hour after I was ordered to attend my father.

It was impossible to obey immediately; my terrors were so great I was obliged to take some hartshorn, and I thought I should have fainted, in spite of all the pains I had taken to prepare myself. I made several attempts to walk, but for near half an hour found all my efforts in vain. At last, with great difficulty, I reached his apartment, but no sooner did the servant open the door, than, endeavouring to run and throw myself at his feet, my strength failed me: I could only reach the first chair, and instantly fainted. When I recovered, I found him and my mother in deep consultation; they were talking

with great earnestness, nor could I doubt its being about your unhappy friend. Now followed a scene I never shall forget. Good heavens! what a rage! I am only amazed, weakened as I was with the apprehensions I had suffered, that I am now alive and able to give you this account.

My father had that morning been with Sir Joseph, who was not able to wait on him. There he learned the particulars of the whole affair; I mean of his meeting and delivering me from Lord B—; more he was ignorant of, as I had not taken the trouble to inform him either where I was going, or from whence his lordship had taken me. I now desired leave to inform my father of both. It was not without difficulty he would suffer me to speak. My mother at last prevailed, and I gave him a very particular account of every thing that had happened since I left him, as well

well as my motives for so doing, but when I begun to beg he would no longer persecute me on that account, he stopped me with fury in his looks, telling me, I ought to think myself extremely fortunate, that a man of Sir Joseph's rank and fortune, would still condescend to accept me for his wife, after the scandalous imprudence I had been guilty of, and the disgrace I had brought on all those who had the misfortune to be related to me. Thank your stars, continued he, that I do not from this moment abandon you for ever; and be assured the reason I do not, is owing to the interposition of your infatuated lover, who has implored me to forgive you, as *he* also means to do.—Rejoice at his amazing condescension, and prepare immediately to accept, with gratitude, his generous, his unmerited offer. Go, added he, with a look that made me tremble, go; and when every thing
is

is ready you shall be sent for. I could only answer with my tears, they fell, my dear Harriot, in great abundance, but fell in vain. I returned to my apartment in a situation which must have excited pity in any hearts but theirs, who alone were able to give this consolation; and they, alas! refused it.

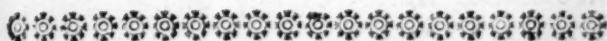
Ah, my dear friend, must I then at last yield to their cruel commands, after all the means I have vainly used to prevent their horrid purpose? Alas! I see no possibility of avoiding that dreadful fate.

Adieu. I leave you to write to my dear Lady Beverly. How shocked will she be at this melancholy change in my affairs! The only consolation I now experience, is from my tormentor's confinement. My father did not condescend to inform me of it, fearing, I suppose to give me pleasure, but one of the servants told me, the surgeons
are

are of opinion the hurt he received may be attended with very dangerous consequences, as it was not properly managed when the accident happened, nor is it, as he then believed, only a sprain. Of his nephew, you may believe, I can hear nothing. Who, my dear Harriot, in this house would dare to give me any intelligence of him? Nay, indeed, they know not that I would desire it.

Farewell. Compassionate your

EMILIA BEVILLE.



L E T T E R LVI.

To the SAME.

STILL miserable! still in the most unhappy situation! No hopes of relief! every one determined to render my future life compleatly wretched!

Ah,

Ah, my dear Harriot, but for the fortunate accident that still confines Sir Joseph, I must before now have been his, in spite of all my prayers and tears. Yes, my dear friend, they only wait his dreaded recovery, which, thank heaven, is not likly to be perfected soon. The pain arising from his ankle which is miserably inflamed, has thrown him into a fever, and his impatience at this delay to his happiness, as he is pleased to call it, adds considerably to his disorder. Ah, why am I obliged to rejoice at the misery of any of my fellow creatures? Yet can I fail to be thankful for this delay? Do you not forgive me, Harriot? Am I not pardonable, when it is considered how entirely my felicity depends on that event?

I have not heard, nor can I now hope to hear, one word from his (perhaps as anxious) nephew. Who now will be so much my friend as to take the charge
of

of a letter from him? How much do I regret leaving Jenny in the country! She now might have been of service to me. I dare not trust any other servant, lest she should betray me to my father. Ah what then would I do? — I know not, my dear Harriot, I am half distracted with my fears. I would give worlds for a line from him. He is continually with his uncle: he might inform me of a thousand things which I die with impatience to learn. Every thing is done here with the greatest secrecy. I am never consulted, scarce indeed spoken to once in the day. Ah, Harriot, a letter! — 'Tis absolutely from himself! — O my foreboding, my beating heart! — I have scarce spirits to read the dear contents. It was brought me this moment by one of the maids, who delivered it with an air of great secrecy. Adieu: you shall know what news it brings before I finish this.

It



It is past, my dear friend! All my hopes are vanished, and I am now indeed compleatly wretched! Good heavens! what a letter!—Yet, were not my hopes entirely vanished before?—Why then this new affliction?—Alas I know not why.—Too sure, I had fondly flattered myself, Providence would yet, by some unforeseen means, deliver me from despair; but that pleasing, that delusive hope is gone! Yes, my dear friend, gone for ever! and I have only to wait my doom with patient resignation.—Alas! Harriot, the amiable Beauchamp is lost in despair!—But hear the particulars.

Finding all my endeavours to change his uncle's purpose had been fruitless, and that my marriage was at all events to be concluded immediately on his recovery, he determined to reveal the long-concealed sentiments of his heart,
in

in hope
means
worst
Aff
rable
with
quain
of his
ness
was g
for ha
know
I tell
dear
He
charg
come
now
that
ever
disap
defen
hear

in hopes that might prevail, as all other means had been ineffectual. — At the worst he could but be wretched.

After waiting some time for a favourable moment, he desired to be left alone with his uncle, and immediately acquainted him with the whole progress of his love, declaring his future happiness depended wholly on the answer he was going to receive, and apologizing for having so long concealed from his knowledge the important secret.—Need I tell you what followed?—Alas! my dear friend, his rage was inconceiveable. He instantly forbid him his house, charging him never, on any pretence, to come again into his presence. He had now done with him and his: he from that hour renounced him, nor would ever see him more. All the dreadfully disappointed Harry could urge in his defence signified nothing, he would not hear him, nor listen to any thing he could

could say. His rage was more violent than you can imagine or any language describe. Now tell me, my dear Harriot, am I not in a situation that highly merits your pity and compassion? — Alas I shall not live to make the desired sacrifice: my death will deliver me from that more dreadful misfortune. Yes, my dear friend, I feel I cannot long support this painful conflict, my heart will break, and at once release me from this world of misery.—Yet, can I then leave the amiable Harry? Leave him a prey to grief and affliction? —Ah, I cannot support that tormenting thought!

Pity me Harriot, pity me, for I am undone.—Adieu.

EMILIA BEVILLE.

P. S. A whispering message delivered to my father at dinner, since I wrote the above letter, has given me great uneasiness.

ness. By his looks, and the haste he made to leave us, even before the cloth was taken away, I am persuaded something of importance is in agitation.— What it can be heaven only knows.

I forgot to tell you I have not yet seen Caroline, she has been some days, and still is, at Windsor, with her uncle Stanhope, but is expected next week.

Adieu.



L E T T E R LVII.

To the SAME.

REJOICE, my amiable Harriot, rejoice with your no longer disconsolate, but happy friend! Do not be too much surprised at this unusual salutation; it is indeed a very unusual one with me, but Providence at length takes pity on your Emilia: her misery is at an end,

end, and nothing appears but prospects of the most perfect felicity. Yes, my dear Harriot, thank heaven my days of affliction are past and gone, I hope, for ever. I am now more at a loss for words to express my joy, than ever I was to describe my grief; but no wonder, I have till now been but little accustomed to write on such delightful subjects.

My father—yes, my dear friend—my father forgives, and is reconciled to his delighted daughter. My mother too, forgets my many faults, and with great goodness shares in my unspeakable joy. My Caroline too—but let me not anticipate the pleasure you will receive from the news I am going to write you, if my emotions do not prevent my very obliging intention.—Yet let me just inform you, to compleat the rapture you are, I am persuaded, already in, that the amiable, the transported Harry, has this moment left me, on my telling him

I was

I was
When
lighte
Yo
last,
in a w
Yet,
cumst
almost
ter in
tioned
not th
peneo
He le
after
or his
break
deeply
was a
ner, t
ty.
could
vain I

I was going to write to my Harriot.—
Whether are you more amazed or delighted?

You may remember I told you in my last, of a message which was delivered in a whisper to my father while at dinner. Yet, perhaps, you have forgot that circumstance, since, I blushing own, it is almost an age since you received the letter in which the said whisper was mentioned; but forgive me: ah you know not the thousand things that have happened to prevent my usual punctuality! He left us, as I told you, immediately after dinner, nor did I see either mamma or him again till the next morning at breakfast. When I entered they were deeply engaged in conversation: there was a something in their looks and manner, that spoke great concern and anxiety. I would have given the universe could I have read their thoughts. In vain I endeavoured to unravel the perplexing

plexing mystery, not one word^{ly} was uttered, in my hearing, that could give me the least information. Finding my presence only prevented the continuation of their discourse, I retired the moment I had done, nor was desired to keep my seat.

Every moment now appeared an age till dinner, as I then hoped they would be more communicative, not doubting but it was my affairs that were under consideration. My then anxiety is not to be expressed. The hour for dining came at last, but no explanation followed; all was silence; but very mysterious looks in both. I was again obliged to withdraw in the most tormenting suspense, nor was I delivered from that painful situation for several tedious days. At last, when I was really almost dead with apprehensions, I was ordered to attend my father in his dressing-room: my mother, the servant informed me,

was

was
I ob
near
like
the
how
I, in
H
a loo
ed f
the g
met
have
offen
my j
do ev
what
treat
still r
am p
past.
whose
versly,
Vor

was also there. With trembling steps I obeyed the command, and had very near, as I had once done before, on a like occasion, fainted, as I approached the door: by the assistance of my salts, however, this delay was prevented, and I, in obedience to orders, took my seat.

How very little, said my father, with a look more mild than any he had assumed for many months, do you deserve the generous treatment you have ever met with, from the man to whom you have given so many repeated causes of offence! Were I to be governed by my just resentment, I should certainly do every thing in my power to prevent what he intends, notwithstanding your treatment of him. It is by him, who still retains a friendship for you, that I am prevailed upon to forget what is past. Yes, continued he, Sir Joseph, whose generous offers you have so perversely, so imprudently rejected, is dy-

ing. Whether your obstinate, your very undutiful behaviour, is in any measure the cause, I will not determine, as I have, at his desire, promised no longer to upbraid or treat you with that severity you so justly deserve. Yes, Emilia, his life is now in imminent danger: there are but small hopes of his recovery. As a proof of that passion he has so long honoured you with, he means to leave you a present which ought to make you blush for your ingratitude. He has desired I will permit you to pay him a visit; I have promised to oblige him, unless you, with your usual perverseness, refuse to obey my orders. If you are disposed for once to oblige both him and me, prepare to accompany your mother in half an hour; by that time I shall be ready to attend you.

I will be silent, my dear friend, since it is impossible to give you any idea of my emotions at that moment. Never,
 sure,

sure, was situation more truly perplexing! I durst not express the excessive joy I felt at the hopes of being freed from Sir Joseph's persecution, as that desirable blessing was to be obtained by such unfortunate means. I found it impossible to make any reply, but immediately left the room, to prepare, as I was ordered, for the mournful visit. My thoughts were all confusion, I scarce knew either what I did or said. To rejoice, shocked even myself; yet, was it possible to avoid feeling a most unfeigned pleasure?

I was called for before my spirits were half composed, and arrived at his house in much less time than I thought it possible to do.

When the coach stopped, my heart began to beat with the most violent palpitations: my emotions were extremely painful, nor was I able, for some moments, to bear the dreaded in-

terview: at last, however, I thought myself tolerably prepared, and offered to follow my mother, which I accordingly did. But, good heavens! my dear creature, how was I shocked, when I beheld the condition to which the poor dying Sir Joseph was reduced! Tears instantly filled my eyes, and all the cruel treatment I had received on his account, was at that moment forgot. He saw my emotions, and expressed, in faint and broken accents, the joy my pity gave him.

I am dying, my lovely Emilia, said he, making an effort to take my hand, which I gave him without reluctance: yes, my cruel, my still adored Emilia, I am dying: I shall no more torment you with an unfortunate passion, you will in a few hours, perhaps, be freed from that mortification which has already given you so much trouble. Can you forgive, as well as pity the man who

has

has been the cause of so much uneasiness? Can you forget the pains I have unhappily occasioned? I could not answer, my tears would not suffer me to speak, but they fully expressed my sorrow. He was satisfied, and pressing my hand to his lips, said, he should now die content. Then turning to my father, begged he would do him the favour to step into the next room and fetch the present he meant to leave me as a testimony of his love, which he implored me to accept, and value for his sake, if not for its own. I assured him I should ever retain a most grateful remembrance of his generous designs in my favour without any such memorial, but I would, nevertheless, accept with pleasure, any he thought proper to offer, and for ever preserve and highly esteem it on his account. He was going to express his satisfaction, but was prevented by the return of my father.—But ah, Harriot,

who can describe my astonishment, or surprise, when I saw him followed by Mr. Beauchamp? It is utterly impossible: my looks only could testify my unspeakable amazement. Every one seemed to enjoy my perplexity. At last, Sir Joseph taking his hand, This, said he, is the present I mean to leave you, my charming Emilia. Will you, as you promised, preserve and value it for my sake? or do you think it will merit your esteem on its own? I was so extreamly affected with Sir Joseph's situation, and the noble proof he then gave of his generous sentiments, that my heart was not able to bear the excessive surprise, without the most violent emotions. My mother saw me ready to faint and immediately led me to a chair.

Good heavens, cried I in a faltering voice, what do I see? Is it possible that my eyes do not deceive me? Or is it indeed Mr. Beauchamp? I had power
for

for no more. He was in a moment at my feet, and pressing my trembling hand with transport to his lips, Yes, my lovely, my adored Emilia, it is indeed your delighted Harry, that thus kneeling implores you to confirm the promise you have just made. Say, my lovely creature, will you for ever preserve and highly value it? This is a felicity I dare not hope for on my own account, but you have assured Sir Joseph you will ever esteem it for his.

Ah, my dear Harriot, was it likely I should recall the promise I had made, on seeing a present so invaluable? Can you imagine what were my emotions at that delightful moment? — Impossible, my dear friend. — Suffer me then to pass over in silence a scene no language can describe.

He now led me to his uncle, who, joining our hands, said, May you, my charming Emilia, be as happy as you

justly deserve to be, or my fondest wishes can desire, and you will then enjoy uninterrupted felicity. The physicians now thought it proper he should rest, as they feared a longer visit might be too much for his then weak condition. We took our leave, my father promising to see him again that night.

Are you not impatient, my dear Harriot, to know by what means this amazing revolution was brought about? You cannot be more so than I was, nor did I learn the particulars till after our return home. I then begged mamma would inform me of what had so highly raised my curiosity, and which I will now, in as few words as possible, repeat to you.

I told you, I believe, some time ago, that Harry had revealed the so long-concealed secret to his uncle, and of the dreadful rage which followed that declaration. They parted in high displeasure,

pleasure, never to meet again. Judge then what must have been my astonishment to see him enter a place where I was persuaded he would never more be seen : for no one had given me the most distant hint of what had past, since I received his despairing epistle. He made several attempts to be again admitted, but entirely without success. He then wrote—ah, Harriot, who ever wrote like him? The letter met with a more favourable reception than its author. Perhaps his uncle's encreasing illness might assist in conquering the resentment he at first expressed, on being informed he had so powerful a rival.—However that might be, it is certain he from that time began to reflect seriously on the passion he had so long entertained, and to see it in its true light, and the injustice he did his nephew, while condemning him for cherishing a passion he had himself so long harboured in his

own bosom. He saw how infinitely more excusable it was in his nephew than it could be in one of his age, and he might now also add infirmity. These reflections made a deep impression: the more he considered his own situation, and the universally acknowledged merit of his late favoured Harry, the more he was persuaded he ought, in order to act nobly, not only to pardon his involuntary crime in becoming his rival, but also endeavour to render him happy, since it was so wholly in his power. It was in consequence of this extraordinary change in his sentiments, that my father received the important whisper, so often mentioned. You will, therefore, no longer be surprised at their altered looks when I joined them next morning at breakfast. Sir Joseph, who had before informed my father of what had past between his nephew and himself, and of his severe determination, now
gave

gave him his letter, telling him the effects it had produced, and desiring his opinion and advice. What they were I do not exactly know, but imagine, from what followed, they served to settle the yet wavering opinion of Sir Joseph. This affair, however, was several days in agitation before he could determine to give up his so long-cherished hopes; but, as his fever encreased, his passion for the pomps and vanities of this wicked world became less violent, and the desire he had to repair the wrongs he was going to do his deserving nephew, every moment grew more powerful. At length, friendship and affection gained a compleat victory over love.—Harry was immediately sent for.—I will not attempt to describe his emotions on the occasion, but leave that part of his history for him to relate when he has the happiness of seeing you. It was then agreed to surprise me

in the manner I have related. Heaven only knows how fully their purpose was answered, for never was mortal creature half so much astonished as was your Emilia Beville! Never, my dear, never shall I forget the amazing scene!

No sooner had he settled this important affair, than his mind was so much relieved that the physicians declared his fever was not near so violent as it had been for some days past; and, to our unspeakable joy, assured us they no longer despaired of his life. This, my dear Harriot, is still their opinion. Sir Joseph's recovery is now one of the blessings I most ardently pray for: I have only this to wish for on earth, nor do I despair of having my petitions in his favour granted. His grateful nephew, as I told you, has just been here, and assures me the favourable symptoms still continue. Need I tell you it was this assurance which gave me spirits to write so long a letter? Caroline

Caroline returned yesterday, and was, you may believe, not a little surprized, at the change that had happened during her absence. If she is thereby in any measure disappointed, she bears it with an admirable grace, nor does any one, you may believe, take notice of the once intended alliance. It is particularly happy for both that they were neither of them ever consulted in form about that affair: had that been the case, their present situation would have been rather disagreeable, but as it is she expresses great joy at my happy prospects.

Adieu, my dear Harriot, I have now, I think, tolerably fulfilled my promise. I will not at this time make any reflections on the history I send, as I am impatient to have you informed of my unexpected good fortune. Once more adieu.—Believe me, as usual,

Your,

EMILIA BEVILLE.

L E T-

L E T T E R LVIII.

To the SAME.

THANK heaven, my dear Harriot, Sir Joseph's fever has entirely left him, and nothing now remains of his late indisposition but a weakness, which will for some time confine him to his apartment. Our joy at this happy change is inexpressible. I was highly diverted with your congratulatory epistle, particularly your caution in regard to delays, Harry too is continually reminding me of that prudent maxim, and adds a thousand other reasons in order to prevail on me no longer to continue a temptation in his uncle's way. Says, I ought in return for the obligations he has conferred on me, to do every thing in my power to prevent his suffering a relapse; and what way so effectual as at once to deprive him of every hope?

—A most

—A most pleasing remedy, it must be confessed.—However, I see no kind of danger, his love is now converted to a more noble passion. Yes, my dear, to my inexpressible satisfaction, Sir Joseph entertains for me now only sentiments of friendship and esteem. He has seen, and is entirely reconciled to Mr. Beauchamp and his lady. Our family too, have been introduced to them. What were the good lady's emotions when Sir Joseph presented me to her (for the interview was at his house) as her future daughter, I'll leave you, Harriot, to judge. She did me the honour, however, to receive me with great politeness, and consequently no notice was taken of her confusion, though I presume every one present could have smiled without much difficulty, at the remembrance of her having undesignedly taken so much pains to preserve a wife for her son. She now treats me with great affection,
and

and seems highly pleased at the intended alliance—for an alliance it must be, they tell me, in spite of all I can say to the contrary. Sir Joseph is determined: how then can I disobey, after his amazing civilities? It would be ungrateful beyond measure, and one would not deliberately be guilty of that dreadful crime. We may indeed differ about the time, perhaps, as he is in violent haste to compleat, as he is pleased to express it, his nephew's felicity. But what is still more perplexing, that very nephew is, if possible, a thousand times more impatient than his hurrying uncle. I own I am a good deal at a loss in what manner to resist their repeated importunities. Sir Joseph's remaining indisposition is at present my only plea, what will be my next heaven knows. Do, Harriot, if you can think of any one you believe will answer my purpose, send it me immediately, or I shall

be

be obliged, in spite of my amazing reluctance, to comply with their unreasonable demands.

Ah, Harriot, I hear his voice!—Can you forgive me for thus abruptly taking my leave?—But no, I will not yet bid you adieu: I will see him first, perhaps his visit may afford me subject for a few more lines.—He is on the stairs.—Coming this moment.—Impatient creature!—Adieu.



But this moment gone, so do not blame me, my dear Harriot, if I send this epistle, short as it is. I told him it lay half finished, and that I must positively send it this night — What could I do more?—Yet he smiled, Harriot, at my air of importance, nor offered to stir, though I gave him all these hints that his company was then disagreeable.—Was it not rather rude, do you think? — It certainly was. —

Yet,

Yet, so thoughtless was I, I never made that reflection till he was gone.

Adieu, my dear friend, I have not a moment to lose, as the servant waits to carry it to the post.

EMILIA BEVILLE.



L E T T E R L I X.

To the S A M E.

From Mrs. STANHOPE.

HERE I am, Harriot, like an obedient and good-natured creature, as I ever was, with full purpose to give you a true and particular account of your friend's wedding. Yes, my dear, her days of freedom are all at an end: no more adventures to be hoped for now. Simple soul! little does she at this time suspect the folly she has been guilty of. Thank my stars, I have
nothing

nothing to reflect on, I did my duty: I laid the fear of matrimony before her eyes, in its true colours, but she was blind, and deaf to all my reasoning. Obstinate—willfully obstinate, my dear, so she may blame herself for what may follow. To say truth, the temptation was rather powerful, and this is all that can be said in her defence.—You never saw her help-mate, did you, Harriot?—It is full as well as it is, and might have been better for a friend of yours, had *she* never seen him neither. But no more of that, he is now out of the question—quite a lost creature—and so fond! Lord help them!—But no matter—a few months hence and we shall see what it will all come to. I, you know, may speak on the subject, I have learned a little wisdom by experience. And so as I was saying, your friend Emilia is absolutely converted into a wife. Happy transformation! if one
could

could but continue to think so for any length of time. Must I be very particular, Harriot, or will you charitably spare me on a subject which has its mortifications? No, you cry, by no means, not one word; I insist upon your being scrupulously minute. I will however spare your wife-like reflections on the joyous subject, and assure you, if you continue to embellish your narrative with those impertinent remarks, I shall put you in remembrance of a certain fable particularly applicable to the occasion.—O very well, my sly friend—but take care, my dear, that I do not in revenge for that pretty hint, at once put an end, not only to my reflections, but epistle also.

Well then.—Sir Joseph, as if conscious he had not many months to flourish in this wicked world—and, *entré nous*, I am fully persuaded he has not:—sensible of this comfortable truth, I say, he

was,

was, if possible, more impatient than his — intolerably handsome — nephew, to have this silly affair concluded. Your friend, you may suppose, gave herself all the airs and graces usually practised on these ridiculous occasions, and they were, by us wise-ones, looked upon in a true light: but Harry, truly, was sighing, dying, expiring, at the dear creature's cruelty.—Terrified to death, no doubt, lest she should, after all the trouble she had cost him, not take him at last.—Silly soul!—But for me, his happy day, as he calls it, would never I believe have been named. I however took upon me to command, as I certainly had a right to do, on a thousand accounts:—and so, Harriot, last Monday, every one being arrayed in their holiday suits, we led the trembling damsel to church, where the ceremony was performed with all becoming gravity, and she returned home, in her own opinion —

nion — and perhaps too in mine — the happiest bride in the universe. From that hour we have had such an intolerable hurry and confusion, with balls, entertainments, and a thousand other ridiculous marks of joy and gladness, that my sober, sedate head is more than half distracted. You, Harriot, know I never had a turn for those hurrying amusements—quite a grave, staid person.—And all this, truly, for a wedding! I made no such wonderful bustle when I played the fool. It is true, I had not quite so many advisers or directors: that makes some small difference, for to do Emilia justice, I believe she would gladly have spared them all this trouble; but these old souls love to do every thing in full parade. Of what consequence, you know, are fine cloaths, fine jewels, fine equipage, &c. &c. unless properly displayed, to raise the spirit of envy in one's friends and neighbours?

To

To r
took
moni
since
bride
ever
again
lady
to hi
self—
not.

Sh
leave
Ah,
natio
will
origi
creat
perso
is no
of th
end
beau

To remonstrate was in vain : Sir Joseph took upon him to be master of the ceremonies. No denying that consolation, since he could not be master of the bride. He was obstinate, as old men ever are. There was no saying a word against it, nor, to say truth, did our lady mother express any violent dislike to his gaudy schemes—more than myself—you would have added, if I had not.

Shall I describe Harry's figure, or leave that task to your imagination?—Ah, Harriot, bright as your said imagination may be, believe me, child, you will fall infinitely short of the divine original. Heavens, my dear, what a creature ! such eyes ! such hair ! teeth ! person ! air ! grace !—But I forget, he is now a poor stupid husband.—In spite of this, Harriot, let me own there's no end to his perfections.—A bad taste in beauty, indeed—but that we will endeavour

YOUR

vour to forget—a perfect being we are not to expect. But you forbid my reflections.

Well, Harriot, are you satisfied with this account? Have I fully gratified your curiosity? If not, you must have been blessed with an immoderate share of it.

I vow I had almost dispatched my epistle without telling you what is, in my opinion, the most agreeable piece of news it will contain. Prepare, my dear, to receive at least half a hundred visitors.—Do not be alarmed, we are to be with you only a single night.—Sir Joseph is ordered by his physicians to repair immediately to the country, in hopes thereby to repair his decaying frame, and to prevent his pining in solitude. It is agreed by the elders of the two families, that we are all to accompany his knightship to his mansion at H—, which they tell me is one of the finest places in England. There we are to
 spend

spend the rest of the summer. Whether I shall not be apt to think it a yawning Party?—I have not yet informed them, but to you, my dear, I may without ceremony hint a thought of that kind.

Emilia orders me to tell you, you must immediately begin to pack your wardrobe, that you may be ready at a minute's warning to join our cavalcade. We shall, as I told you, spend one day and night with your lady mother, and then proceed on our journey. This is our plan: I hope you have no objections to the part you are to perform?—but no fear of your refusing—I am much deceived if Harry does not prove a sufficient inducement.

Adieu, my dear girl, you owe me at least a thousand thanks for this agreeable epistle, which I shall expect to receive when we meet. If I was not abundantly tired, I would tell you how very happy that expectation makes me.

but will reserve it for part of our conversation when that event takes place, as well as the multitude of civil things I was ordered to say from every one of this society. Once more adieu.

Yours sincerely,

CAROLINE STANHOPE.

F I N I S.

BOOKS Printed for F. and J. NOBLE.

- 1 **A** Dopted Daughter, or Clarissa B—, 2 vol. 6s
- 2 **A** Akenfide on the Bloody Flux, 1s
- 3 Adventures of the Marquis of Noailles, 2 vol. 6s
- 4 Apparition, or Female Cavalier, 3 vol. 9s
- 5 Bracelet, or Fortunate Discovery, 2 vol. 6s
- 6 Bubbled Knights, 2 vol. 6s
- 7 Child's Entertainer, a Collection of Riddles, 6d
- 8 Country Cousins, 2 vol. 6s
- 9 Conflict, or the Hist. of Miss Fanbrook, 3 vol. 9s
- 10 Devil upon Crutches in England, 3s
- 11 Double Disappointment, a Farce, 1s
- 12 Emily Willis, 2 vol. 6s
- 13 Eliza, or the Hist. of Miss Granville, 2 vol. 6s
- 14 Each Sex in their Humour, 2 vol. 6s
- 15 Fortune-Teller, or Footman Ennobled, 2 vol. 6s
- 16 Female American, 2 vol. 5s
- 17 Fortunate Villager, 2 vol. 6s
- 18 History of Sir Harry Herald, 3 vol. 9s
- 19 History of a Young Lady of Distinction, 2 vol. 6s
- 20 History of the Plague in 1665, 6s
- 21 History of Miss Cathcart, 2 vol. 6s
- 22 History of my own Life, 2 vol. 6s
- 23 History of Frederick the Forsaken, 2 vol. 6s
- 24 History of Frank Hammond, 3s
- 25 History of Miss Sally Sable, 2 vol. 6s
- 26 History of Mr. Byron and Miss Greville, 2 vol. 6s
- 27 History of Sir Roger, and his Son Joe, 2 vol. 6s
- 28 History of two Persons of Quality, 3s
- 29 History

BOOKS Printed for F. and J. NOBLE.

29	History of Miss Kitty N——,	3s
30	History of Lady Louisa Stroud, 2 vol.	6s
31	History of Miss Lucinda Courtney, 3 vol.	9s
32	History of Miss Harriot Fitzroy, 2 vol.	6s
33	History of Amanda,	3s
34	History of Charles Chance,	3s
35	History of Mrs. Drayton, 3 vol.	9s
36	History of the Arabians, 4 vol.	16s
37	Jilts, or The Female Fortune Hunters, 3 vol.	9s
38	King Lear, a Tragedy, altered by Tate,	6d
39	Life of Crusoe Richard Davis, 2 vol.	6s
40	Life of Hamilton Murray, 3 vol.	9s
41	Muse in Good Humour, 2 vol.	6s
42	Muse in a Moral Humour, 2 vol.	6s
43	Mother-in-Law, 2 vol,	6s
44	Memoirs of a Coquette,	4s
45	Moral and Critical Reflections,	3s
46	Memoirs of a Scotch Family, 2 vol.	6s
47	Nunnery, or Hist. of Miss Howard, 2 vol.	5s
48	Rival Mother, 2 vol.	6s
49	Reformed Coquette,	2s
50	Supposed Daughter, 3 vol.	9s
51	Singleton's Voyages and Adventures,	3s
52	True Merit True Happiness, 2 vol.	6s
53	Voyages and Travels of Capt. Holmesby,	3s
54	Virtuous Criminal, 2 vol.	6s
55	Van's Life and Adventures, 2 vol.	6s
56	Ways to kill Care, a Collection of Songs, 1s	6d